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Living Wandle Landscape Partnership



Final Evaluation & Completion Report March 2018



Abbreviations used in text

ALGG	(All) London Green Grid	LW	Living Wandle Landscape Partnership
BSTW	Beddington Sewage Treatment Works	LWT	London Wildlife Trust
EA	Environment Agency	MHP	Morden Hall Park
ELC	Enable Leisure and Culture	MPCH	Merton Priory Chapter House
FoRP	Friends of Ravensbury Park	MPT	Merton Priory Trust
FRAP	Flood Risk Activity Permit	MTR	Mid-term Evaluation Review/ Report
GIGL	Greenspace Information for Greater London (Environmental Records Centre)	NE	Natural England
GW	Groundwork London	NT	The National Trust
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund	RSL	Registered social landlord
IE	Independent Evaluator	SAUL	Sustainable & Accessible Urban Landscapes (EU project)
INNS	Invasive non-native species	SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance
LB	London Borough	WT	Wandle Trust (part of the South East Rivers Trust)
LBW	London Borough of Wandsworth	WVF	Wandle Valley Forum
LCAP	Landscape Conservation Action Plan	WVRP/ WVRPT	Wandle Valley Regional Park/ Trust
LP	Landscape Partnership/ Scheme		

Codes used to identify respondents to survey & interviews

PL = Project lead or Partner representative


V = Volunteer

PA = Participant in one or more *LW* events or activities

NP = Aware of *LW* but not involved in activities

NA = Unaware of the *LW* scheme until approached as part of this evaluation.

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Cover: (Clockwise from top right): Floating pennywort removal in the Wandle; school children in project Kingfisher; the Chapter House foundations below Merantun Way and demolition of the south wall; the Poulter Park Gateway; a 'Window on the Wandle' education session; the final *LW* celebratory conference and (centre) the Wandle at Windsor Avenue (Autumn 2017).

Foreword

As Chair of the Board of the Living Wandle Landscape Partnership, I welcome the opportunity to introduce this evaluation report.

The origins of the partnership began in the 1980s when the former Greater London Council suggested plans for sub-regions, including the Wandle Valley. From this time, the development of the Wandle Trail Group in the 1990s, the emergence of the Wandle Valley Forum in 2005 and the publication of the Wandle Valley Vision in 2008 have been key milestones along the way to establishing the Wandle Valley as a recognised sub-region of London.



It wasn't then until 2011 when, as lead partner, Wandsworth Council submitted a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the development of the Living Wandle Landscape Partnership Scheme. During the following years the firm foundations of this partnership were laid and the momentum for landscape working within the valley was embodied by the creation of the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust, the coordinating body for building and sustaining a Regional Park. In June 2013, the HLF approved the delivery phase of the scheme, triggering the start of a unique four-year programme, the first urban landscape partnership scheme supported by the Fund.

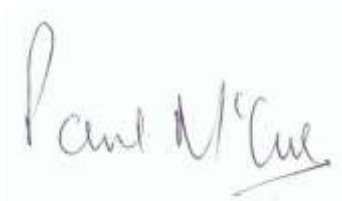
Management of the scheme took in its stride a structural change in October 2015 when Wandsworth Council transferred responsibility to our new charitable staff mutual – Enable Leisure and Culture. Despite the challenges of creating this new company, Jerry Birtles and I have continued to enjoy working with the staff team, the Steering Group and the Board. Our thanks go to them all for their commitment.

Over the scheme's four years we have been extremely fortunate in having highly-dedicated staff, partners and volunteers and it has been gratifying to see this type of collaboration working so effectively. The results are of considerable credit to the organisations involved, showing their ability to deliver great projects and enthuse the local community across the four boroughs of Croydon, Sutton, Merton and Wandsworth through which the Wandle flows. The results of the delivery phase were fittingly celebrated in the Living Wandle Conference in October 2017.

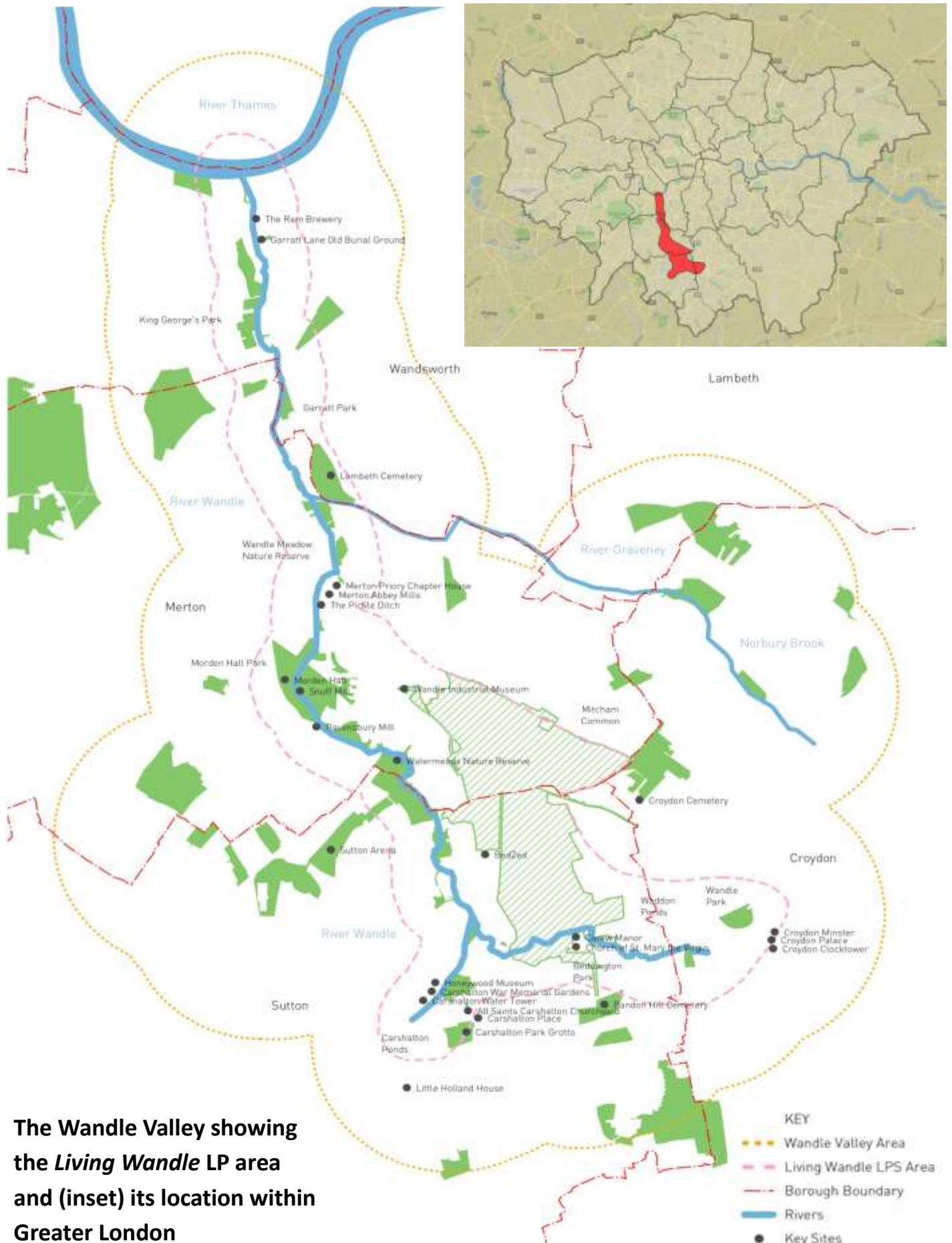
Looking now to beyond the May 2018 finishing date for the scheme, it will be crucial to maintain and further develop the profile and improvements to the Wandle Valley. The vehicle for co-ordinating the efforts to do so has to be the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust and the final phases of the scheme have developed legacy plans which will help the Trust to 'fly the flag' for the Wandle in the future.

I am sure the passion for the river and the valley will be in good hands.

Thank you all, again, for your support and contributions to the scheme's achievements.



Paul McCue (on behalf of Wandsworth Council)
Chair, Board of the Living Wandle Landscape Partnership
Managing Director, Enable Leisure and Culture



The Wandle Valley showing the *Living Wandle* LP area and (inset) its location within Greater London

Living Wandle Landscape Partnership



Final Evaluation & Completion Report Summary

Introduction: the Wandle and its Landscape Partnership

Living Wandle (LW) is HLF's first urban Landscape Partnership (LP) Scheme. Focused on the catchment of the River Wandle and covering parts of the London Boroughs of Croydon, Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth, its distinctive features include a largely built-up landscape with high population density, diverse communities including areas of social deprivation, but with many public open spaces and a great deal of ongoing activity. LW's vision has been to secure:

"A vibrant healthy, sustainable, multi-functional landscape in which people recognise and are inspired by the natural and cultural heritage of the valley and river". ⁽¹⁾

At an overall cost of £2.6m, supported with £1.9m of Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant, LW's 28 delivery partners have delivered a programme of over 30 separately costed projects which together address the four HLF programme aims of heritage conservation, community engagement, access and learning, and training and skills.

The Accountable Body (Lead Partner) for the scheme is the London Borough of Wandsworth (LBW) working through a small Partnership Board and a wider Steering Group (SG) comprising representatives of the nine original core partners. Day-to-day co-ordination is through a small team comprising an LP Manager and two Project Officers.

A successful application for HLF funding in 2010 led to an 18-month development phase involving intensive consultation leading to the production of a Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP) in December 2012. This was submitted with a Stage 2 (delivery) application in February 2013, agreed by HLF in June. The LW scheme was launched in the autumn of 2013 and formally ends with the submission of this report to HLF in March 2018.

The evaluation context

This report provides an independent assessment of what the LW LP scheme has delivered (its outputs), what the benefits (outcomes) have been for heritage and people and what lasting impact LW will have made (its legacy). It celebrates LW's successes and pays tribute to the hard work of volunteers, project



leads, partners and the LP team. It also considers what may not have worked so well and the lessons that may be drawn for *LW*'s successor body and for other comparable schemes in the future.

The report represents the conclusion of an ongoing evaluative process commenced in early 2015 with the production of a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework 'owned' by the Partnership as a whole. Quantitative information is based primarily on monitoring data supplied by the LP team. Wider evaluation focuses primarily on outcomes and legacy and includes case studies, graphics and other illustrative material. Methodology has included: desk research; key informant interviews with partner representatives, participants, project leads and the LP team; site visits to all project locations within the *LW* area; workshops and focus groups; and two online surveys (at mid delivery and towards completion of the LP scheme).

The report fulfils the requirement of HLF for *LW* to conduct a final evaluation of its work and to embody the results in a completion report to be submitted to HLF at the end of the scheme. But it is intended to do much more than enable HLF to 'sign off' its grant. It is a document for the Partnership as a whole, for partners, participants and for a wider public. The experience of *LW* should assist future multi-project schemes working at a 'landscape' level, particularly in urban areas, in designing and delivering their work.

Projects and outputs

LW's nineteen initial principal projects are a subset of over 100 proposed or existing projects in the ALGG's 'rolling list'⁽²⁾ adjusted and supplemented with additional smaller projects to address HLF's four programme areas with a distribution over the four London boroughs covering the Wandle's catchment area. Subsequent to *LW*'s launch, further projects were added, supported by underspend or contingency, producing a total of over thirty funded projects, one of which was itself a multi-project mini-grant scheme introduced in the second half of delivery in connection with the annual Wandle Festival/ Fortnight.

Detailed outlines of the first nineteen projects with which the scheme commenced together with the wider strategic context within which they exist are contained within the *LW* LCAP submitted as the basis for HLF funding. Summaries of all projects are provided in Appendix 2 of the main report.

Headline outputs at a glance:

- 6 physical river enhancements covering 1.2 km of river. A further 7.6 km enhanced for wildlife through 6 eel pass projects and 20 clean ups removing over 60 tonnes of rubbish
- Entire river brought under improved management for INNS
- 1 pond restored, 2 scrapes created and 200m of new hedgerow planted
- 11 access improvements implemented and 10 view points documented
- 284 active volunteers contributing at least 1077 volunteer days equivalent to £105,000 in value
- 8160 school children learnt about the river valley and its wildlife
- 39,571 people including 14,477 young people participating in a total of over 1,192 events
- 155 training courses, delivering 2,383 days of learning to 3,299 people
- 5 festivals. 2,659 participants in the 2017 Wandle Fortnight facilitated by £3,140 of *LW* grants
- 50 oral histories collected; 8 films and 2 books produced; a public online archive with over 494 items
- £1.5m value added to projects; 16 temporary jobs created
- An audience of at least 1.2m reached online.

Administration, delivery and governance

The LP team, working to the *LW* Steering Group and to LBW/ELC officers, are to be congratulated on their dedication, commitment and enthusiasm, which has been a major factor in securing delivery despite a number of delays particularly in relation to capital projects. They have applied effective project oversight, and this has been done in a way which has been open and accommodating. This perception is supported by the responses to the online survey and interviews.

Office procedures have worked well with some exemplary features. Modified during the first phase of the evaluation these include project summary sheets incorporating updated targets and anticipated outcomes, partner reporting of progress against targets together with quarterly claim forms, and end-of-project evaluations requiring outcome evidence with the final claim.

The team and the Partnership as a whole are to be commended in particular on their concern with legacy.ⁱ All major projects have produced their own legacy plan and these have fed in to *LW*'s own whole-scheme Legacy Plan which identifies not only the lasting benefits that *LW* has achieved but also how these can be carried forward within the framework of an overall vision for the area and with the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust (WVRPT) as *LW*'s legacy body.

LW was not initially conceived as a community-based scheme (though community initiatives have featured strongly in its programme) and the Partnership has been led by established organisations with a significant presence in the area. Half of total scheme costs are allocated to just three projects focused on capital works and catchment management, and over a quarter have been delivered through a single organisation. This has advantages for some projects in terms of facilitating delivery and securing continuity, as well as in arrangements for those projects' legacy. At the same time all partner organisations have seen participation as much more than an opportunity to progress their own institutional priorities. A genuine partnership has been established which is expected to continue beyond the life of the *LW* scheme.

Smaller 'people' projects (river 'clean-ups', INNS control, historical recording, oral testimony, outdoor and classroom based education) have all led to significant community and volunteer engagement. They were joined in the second half of delivery by a programme of community micro-grants which have provided a small but significant 'bottom-up' element to the scheme (and should help to secure the continuation of the annual Wandle Fortnight).

Outcomes and legacy

At the time of compiling this report, works to Merton Priory Chapter House, the most costly project, accounting for over 20% of total HLF grant are at an early stage. The delay has meant that it is difficult to do more than predict the long-term benefits that will accrue, and associated community-based activities (some *LW* funded including a teachers' pack and educational film) will take place after the end of the LP scheme.

Another capital project in the *LW* programme and potentially one of the most significant in relation to its longer-term ambitions in contributing to an integrated vision for the area is Wandle Gateways, though this is also one of the least developed in the LCAP. Issues of branding and permissions have meant that

ⁱ *LW*'s Legacy Planning page can be inspected on <https://wandlevalleypark.co.uk/projects/livingwandlelegacy/>

delivery of all Gateways has been significantly delayed but seven Gateways will have been completed within the lifetime of the scheme. The Gateways project is vitally connected to other green infrastructure improvements —not all of which are part of *LW*— which have already brought noticeable improvements. Together other *LW* projects, in particular Wandle Vistas, these should provide a stimulus to further initiatives aimed at improving amenity and physical access.

Physical conservation management works to the area's natural heritage are largely complete. All focus appropriately on the river and its riparian and associated wetland habitats and take place amongst a good deal of related activity. Ongoing monitoring and management will be required if biodiversity and environmental benefits are to be maintained. The continued engagement of partner bodies seems likely to ensure that this will be the case for example in Catchment Plan Delivery and INNS control, supplemented by the activities of volunteers and local organisations in the case of Morden Hall Park, Ravensbury Park and elsewhere, though there has been a lack of local support in Waddon Ponds.

Partners and the *LW* team have done well to secure engagement from volunteers and the public. Participant testimony both in relation to major ongoing activities such as habitat management (including river 'clean-ups') as well as local infrastructure works such as the MHP Boardwalk suggest that there has been good community 'buy-in'. Participants in one-off 'people' activities such as the three Industrial Heritage Recording projects all report positively on their experience and personal testimony indicates that there has been a lasting personal benefit to a significant number of individuals. The outputs of some projects, such as Wandle Vistas could be of significant benefit in furthering local knowledge of and commitment to, the area's special features, potentially influencing planning policy.

Most projects and much of *LW*'s volunteer and community-related activity include an element of skills acquisition, from film-making/ acting and oral history to reed bed management and freshwater invertebrate identification. Some physical conservation projects have involved professional accreditation, principally in relation to pesticide use.

LW projects exist amongst, and complement numerous other projects and initiatives promoted both by *LW* partners and by other bodies in the area. Locations for *LW* funded activities have inevitably been to some degree opportunistic and while the outcomes and legacy of individual projects are important, their significance in relation to the *LW*'s aims, as embodied in its LCAP is as part of a wider mosaic of activities.

Conclusions

Living Wandle, on completion of outstanding projects, is expected to have amply fulfilled its commitments to delivery beyond those targets laid down in the LCAP. This can be attributed in no small measure to several factors. The first is the motivation and enthusiasm of project leads and volunteers who have delivered many of the project outputs identified above. Another is the energy and focus of the LP team which has been well beyond the call of duty, the support provided by LBW and the commitment and dedication of partners represented on the Steering Group who have overseen project delivery. Finally the openness of all involved to working together over a set of common aims has meant that HLF funding has produced genuine 'value added' and has not been seen merely as another funding stream to progress institutional priorities.

Beyond this, *LW* has helped to generate a common purpose within and beyond the Partnership capable of ensuring that the scheme's legacy is greater than the sum of individual project outcomes. Particularly significant in this respect are:

- A wider understanding of the river and its catchment on the part of local organisations and the wider community
- A significant boost to river management / INNS control beyond the formal responsibilities of riparian landowners, through the agency of the Wandle Trust
- A greater sense amongst residents and communities of local identity focused on the river, its historical associations and its recreational and amenity potential.

To the degree that, beyond the immediate benefits to the areas natural and cultural heritage, for its communities and to individual participants, *LW* has contributed to a synergism between grass-roots activism and institutional collaboration it will have more than proved its worth.

Ambitions to create a Wandle Valley Regional Park predate *LW* and go back at least to 2005 with the formation of the Wandle Trust (now part of the South-East Rivers Trust), the Wandle Valley Forum and a Wandle Valley Regional Park Board, whose 2008 Vision Document⁽³⁾ was supported by all three organisations. The award to the WVRPT of an HLF Resilient Heritage Grant recognises the potential for taking these ambitions forward and continuing some of the activities initiated by *LW*, thus securing an effective legacy for the partnership's activities over the past four years.

Learning points

Key learning points, arising mainly from what has worked well as well but some also from what has not worked so well, offered to future multi-project, multi-partner schemes working at a landscape scale, particularly in urban areas, include:

- Think seriously about evaluation in the development phase and include an outline of what you propose in your funding proposals. Produce a monitoring and evaluation framework, 'owned' by the Partnership as a whole, early in delivery, keep this under review and revise it as required. Embed evaluation – especially of 'intangibles' - in project delivery. Include a thorough interim evaluation/ mid-term review of the scheme as a whole. Consider carefully how you might best use external/ independent consultants.
- Get your biggest projects, especially those involving physical works, underway from the start. This will help to demonstrate achievement and provide momentum to smaller projects and to the scheme as a whole. Reduce risk by sorting permissions and practicalities for key physical works in the development phase; don't leave this until you start delivery.
- Use third party contracted delivery, especially of 'people' projects, with care. This may relieve your team of administration, but does add another layer of overheads, and can prove inflexible, especially when linked to capital works which may be delayed. Local delivery can help secure community 'buy-in' even if it carries more risk.
- Incorporate 'grass roots' projects or a community initiatives (small grant) fund in your application to HLF. Promote it widely from the start of delivery, administered by a committee working alongside your steering group (perhaps chaired by an independent person). This will help root your scheme in the community and landscape, providing a 'bottom up' element to balance 'top down' capital projects or those led by established institutional partners.
- Retain financial flexibility for activities like volunteer training by having a single budget 'pot' rather than separate training allocations for individual projects.

- ‘Branding’ is important. HLF’s insistence on a distinctive profile for its funded schemes is understandable but where a legacy body (which can be separate from the scheme’s Accountable Body) is already in place there may be strong reasons for adopting a recognisable title to avoid public confusion and secure commitment to the future.
- Don’t skimp on communications. A good website is essential from day 1. An interactive map will help people relate to the landscape as a whole. Use a variety of social media. Ensure contact details of all project participants and volunteers are retained and circulate regular newsletters, centrally and via partners. This will help your scheme to establish an identity against the ‘noise’ of other activities in the area and to secure ‘buy-in’ to its wider aims beyond individual projects.
- Publicise and praise completed projects and acknowledge the effort of individuals involved.
- Work closely with your HLF Monitor and Case Officer to adapt your scheme to changing circumstances and respond to new opportunities as they arise. Use underspend or contingency monies creatively. Have some projects ready ‘on the shelf’. Even if they cannot be launched within the life of the scheme they will help demonstrate continuing need and possible additional funding opportunities.
- Alongside tight financial procedures conforming to the practices of your Accountable Body, be flexible about governance arrangements, for example by co-opting Steering Group representation beyond initial delivery partners and by development of stronger institutional or community links.
- Make sure that you retain the copyright on all the media and other products arising from funded projects so that they may be made available online or transferred to a successor/ legacy body with public access retained.
- Begin to secure clarity (and build consensus) around shared legacy aspirations for your scheme at an early stage; make this an ongoing focus of work from mid-delivery onwards.

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If not bound with this Summary, the full report can be accessed on the Living Wandle web pages;
<http://wandlevalleypark.co.uk/the-living-wandle-partnership/>

Living Wandle Landscape Partnership



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Quantitative data (including financial information) has been provided by the Living Wandle team and/or by *LW's* partners and project leads. We are particularly grateful in this regard to Rebecca Watts (LP Manager), Sarah Perry and Kelvin Shewry (Project Officers), their predecessors Louise Crothall and Tina Corr. Their energy, drive, commitment and enthusiasm have been a major factor in securing the successes of *LW's* projects documented in this report. Thanks are also due to their colleagues in Enable Leisure and Culture, LBW's parks and recreational delivery arm.

Our own assessment has focused principally on outcomes, legacy and qualitative data. In this regard we would especially like to thank – and pay tribute to - all the Living Wandle partner representatives, project leads, volunteers and participants as well as individuals from the local community who responded to our questionnaire, took part in interviews, and/ or welcomed us on site during our visits.

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Figure 1 A Wordle analysis of responses to a request to 'give three words which sum up the LW scheme for you' in the final online survey. The prominence of each word in the word-cloud reflects the frequency of its use.

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Living Wandle Landscape Partnership

Living Wandle (LW) is a £2.6m Landscape Partnership (LP) Scheme supported with £1.9m of Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant, focused on the River Wandle and covering parts of the London Boroughs of Croydon, Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth. The nine founding Partnership members were the London Boroughs of Wandsworth, Croydon and Merton, the Wandle Trust (WT, part of the South-East Rivers Trust), The National Trust (NT), London Wildlife Trust (LWT), Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust (WVRPT), Groundwork London (GW) and the Wandle Valley Festival.ⁱ

A successful application for HLF funding in 2010 led to an 18-month development phase involving intensive consultation leading to the production of an LCAP in December 2012 a Stage 2 (delivery) application in February 2013, agreed by HLF in June. Most projects were complete by late 2017 by which time 28 delivery partners were responsible for over 30 projects. The scheme formally ends with the submission of this report to HLF in March 2018.

The Partnership's Vision as embodied in the Project's Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP) is to secure:

“A vibrant healthy, sustainable, multi-functional landscape in which people recognise and are inspired by the natural and cultural heritage of the valley and river”⁽¹⁾

The LCAP articulates this vision in a set of five principal aims:

- A1 To revitalise the River Wandle** as an identifiable high quality asset to the communities of South London through engagement with the **natural and built heritage** of the river.
- A2 To provide a multi-functional living landscape** which is accessible to all and an open space resource that contributes to health and well-being.
- A3 To strengthen the partnership** of people who look after the river.
- A4 To reintroduce the local diverse community** to the river and to find ways in which this re-established relationship can **enrich the lives of local people**.
- A5 To help make the river valley a clean safer and much more sustainable** environment.⁽¹⁾

A series of workshops held during the life of LW articulated these aims in a set of ten legacy outcomes as follows:

- 1) Increasing support and institutional recognition for the Wandle Valley Regional Park
- 2) Enhance biodiversity, habitat connectivity and ecosystem resilience in and along the Wandle and its surrounding spaces, including public realm and the hinterland
- 3) Existing and new partners, including the local authorities, voluntary and community organisations, and local businesses work together in new ways across the LW area
- 4) Physical access to the Wandle and surrounding green space has been enhanced
- 5) More and different types of people value and enjoy the landscape in different ways

ⁱ The London Borough of Sutton dropped out of the formal Partnership during the development stage as it was unable to commit to match funding. Wandle Valley Festival was dissolved as a distinct organisation in early 2015 and its functions were assimilated within the LW scheme, from 2016 in collaboration with the Wandle Valley Forum and local groups.

- 6) Volunteering produces lasting benefits for the area (more people with better skills, knowledge and keen to get engaged) and for volunteers themselves (commitment, understanding, job prospects or enjoyment)
- 7) The River Wandle is respected - visibly clean with reduced pollution and waste
- 8) Intellectual access to the LW area's natural and cultural heritage has been improved through on- and off- site interpretation
- 9) Sustainable—stays that way for future, easy to maintain, low cost improvements
- 10) Increased usage and involvement in a variety of heritage and wildlife assets.

All of these aims fit well with the multidisciplinary, multifunctional concept of landscape encapsulated in the European Landscape Convention, adopted by the Council of Europe in 2000 and applicable to the UK since March 2007. This promotes a definition of landscape which usefully underpins the landscape partnership philosophy: *'An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'* — a rich concept that encompasses but goes beyond sectoral (geomorphological, ecological, archaeological, historical or aesthetic) approaches. The Convention makes it clear that people are at the heart of all landscapes (commonplace and 'degraded' as well as eminent), each of which has its own distinctive character and meaning to those who inhabit or visit it.⁽⁴⁾



Figure 2 Octavia Hill's appeal in *The Times* Monday, 20 March 1911, for a 'landscape' approach to the Wandle Valley.

The LW Partnership was originally conceived in part as a response to a recognition that the River Wandle and its catchment, covering parts of four London boroughs, forms a potentially distinctive cultural landscape in its own right. A densely built-up but very varied suburban landscape with diverse communities, including areas of relative deprivation, provides a home to a population close to 1 million. A rich industrial and preindustrial history is reflected in four Scheduled Monuments, a number of listed buildings and numerous unprotected artefacts and historical remains. Twelve Local Nature Reserves complement the wildlife value of the river itself, and a chain of open spaces offers immense existing and potential recreational value.

However, the lack of a strong identity and identifiable 'natural signature'⁽⁵⁾ to the river, coupled with physical barriers to access and a lack of awareness and understanding, has presented a significant obstacle to engagement by local people with the Wandle. Threats to the natural and built heritage continue, not least those to the wildlife and water quality of the Wandle itself.

Some of these issues are long standing. Pollution of the Wandle was a recognised problem in the mid-nineteenth century.⁽⁶⁾ Efforts to secure public access to greenspace bore fruit with the opening of Wandle Park (Croydon) 1890 followed by the creation of public parks by other Boroughs. In parallel

came campaigns to protect Wandle fisheries against the pollution and sedimentation of fish spawning grounds. In 1911, Octavia Hill (founder of the NT) launched the River Wandle Open Spaces Committee to secure public access to the Wandle including a riverside walk along its banks.⁽⁷⁾



Figure 3 Locations of principal greenspace within the Wandle Valley

More recently growing community activity has been accompanied by recognition of the significance of the area in relation to the Greater London region as a whole. Wandle Piscators were formed in 2004 and an annual Wandle Festival was launched that June. In 2005 the London Plan (re)designated the Wandle Valley as a regeneration corridor and the South London Partnership (the four Wandle boroughs) launched the Wandle Valley Green Ribbon Initiative as an element in its draft Sub-Regional Development Framework. In the same year the WT was established to protect and enhance the river; the Wandle Valley Forum (WVF) was established – initially as meeting point for organisations across the four London Boroughs, and a Board was established to co-ordinate moves for formal recognition of the special features of the area including proposals for the establishment of a Wandle Valley Regional Park (WVRP).

On 17 September 2007, 1,600 litres of sodium hypochlorite were accidentally discharged into the Wandle from Beddington Sewage Treatment Works. Thames Water pledged to support restoration

measures by funding a partnership programme worth a record £500,000 over the course of 5 years. In March 2008 the consultation phase of the resulting ‘Living Wandle’ project was launched to stakeholders and local residents at a packed Public Meeting at Morden Hall. In parallel a WVRP Vision document⁽³⁾ articulated a wider perspective for the Wandle Valley as a whole.

A Living Wandle timeline is presented in **Appendix 1** of this report.

LW’s delivery has been based around a programme of (initially nineteen, eventually over thirty) individual projects costed from under £5,000 to £430,000, designed to generate outcomes across the four HLF LP programme areas of: natural and cultural heritage conservation; community participation; access and learning; training and skills. In process of delivery, an underspend enabled the promotion of additional projects – including a small programme of community-delivered microgrants – across the programme aims.

The Accountable Body (Lead Partner) for the scheme is the London Borough of Wandsworth (LBW) working through a small Partnership Board. Strategic leadership is provided by a Steering Group (SG) formally of 12 representatives plus the *LW* team together with additional invited members – a total of c. 25 individuals including representatives of all major project partners. The SG and Board are both chaired by former LBW officers, subsequently employed by Enable Leisure and Culture (ELC) a staff mutual management organisation formed in October 2015.

Coordination and administration is provided via a small team based at MHP, comprising an LP Scheme Manager and two Project Officersⁱ line managed by the SG Chair and with significant inputs in kind from other LBW officers and ELC staff.

LW is HLF's first urban LP and the first Lottery funded landscape-scale scheme in the London area. Its projects have been delivered alongside much other ongoing activity in the catchment particularly in relation to its 'squeezed' open spaces. Some other major Lottery-funded projects which are directly related to the aims of Living Wandle include:

- Morden Hall 'Heart of the Park' project (NT; £2.5m including £990k from HLF, awarded March 2009; renovation of the stable yard buildings and installation of carbon-neutral energy sources including an Archimedes Screw turbine on a Wandle mill-race, completed mid-2013)
- Wandle Park (L B Croydon; £2.5m including £2.1m from HLF and Big Lottery, awarded December 2010; resurfacing the headwaters of Wandle (previously culverted) and restoration of Victorian bandstand, fountain and boating lake; completed late 2012)
- Beddington Park and the Grange (L B Sutton; £3.7m including £3m from HLF and Big Lottery, awarded July 2016; lake restoration, access improvements and amenity works; completion due early 2018)
- Activities on Tooting Graveney (a tributary of the Wandle) Common as part of the Tooting Common Heritage Project (LB Wandsworth; £1.9m including £1.6m from HLF awarded December 2015, completion 2019).

1.2 Evaluation context and methods

This report fulfils the requirement of HLF for the Living Wandle Landscape Partnership (*LW*) to conduct a final evaluation of its work. However this report is intended to do more than enable HLF to 'sign off' its grant. It is the culmination of an ongoing evaluative process initiated early in delivery, manifesting a commitment to evaluation as a process of 'improving' (providing ongoing feedback to enhance delivery) as well as 'proving' (that public monies have been properly spent).⁽⁸⁾

Our final evaluation has been designed to provide an independent assessment of what *LW* projects have delivered (their outputs), what the benefits (outcomes) have been for heritage and people and what lasting impact *LW* will have made (its legacy). This report is effectively the 'CV' of the *LW* scheme, a document for the Partnership as a whole, for participants and volunteers and for a wider public.

This report represents the conclusion of an ongoing evaluative process commenced in early 2015 for which key interim outputs have included:

Extended case studies of two completed projects contained in the Stage 1 Interim Report presented to the *LW* Steering Group and Board in November 2015.

A **Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**⁽⁹⁾ produced in March 2015 in collaboration with the *LW* team and partners and 'owned' by the Partnership as a whole.

Annual Reports to the *LW* SG and Board

A **Mid-Term Evaluation Report**⁽¹⁰⁾ presented to the *LW* AG in June 2016 aimed at helping the Partnership take stock of what it had achieved to date, plan for the second half of delivery, and begin the process of planning for legacy.

ⁱ Initially from 2014-2016 a Project Officer and (part-time) Administrator.

This Final Evaluation Report aims to:

- ‘Tell the story’ of *LW*, its origins, aims, development and delivery.
- Assess what has been achieved; where the original ambitions and targets have been met (or exceeded), and where (and why) there may have been a shortfall.
- Identify the benefits that *LW* has delivered, the lasting difference that it has made for the area’s heritage and communities and the arrangements in place to ensure this legacy is carried forward.
- Review the effectiveness of governance and project management structures and identify any administrative weaknesses.
- Examine the extent to which *LW*’s vision, aims and objectives have been realised, identify what has been less successful or might have been done differently and the lessons that may be drawn from this.

Beyond HLF and the *LW* Partnership the report is addressed to all Wandle stakeholders including those associated with plans for legacy and *LW*’s successor body. There will also be a wider potential audience. *LW* is HLF’s first urban LP to be completed and the experience of *LW* should assist future multi-project schemes working at a ‘landscape’ level to design and deliver their work, particularly in an urban context.

Quantitative data in this report is based on information supplied by the *LW* team. Outcomes are based in part on information provided in the completion reports supplied by individual project leads/ partners (in some cases supplemented by additional information from the *LW* team and from other sources) and also on our own assessment of what has been achieved in each programme area, informed by the following:

- **Desk research** including examination of a wide range of documents relating to *LW* and its Partnership.
- **Liaison** with the LP team, partners, project leads and SG members who have provided information and assistance.
- **Key informant interviews** with partner representatives and project leads, both face-to-face and by telephone.
- **Site visits** to all project locations within to the *LW* area.
- An **Evaluation and Legacy Workshop** held in October 2016 together with shorter workshops held in conjunction with SG meetings.
- An **online survey** issued via an e-invitation to the *LW*’s own circulation list and via partner contact lists and newsletters.ⁱ

ⁱ The questionnaire can be inspected at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LivingWandle>.

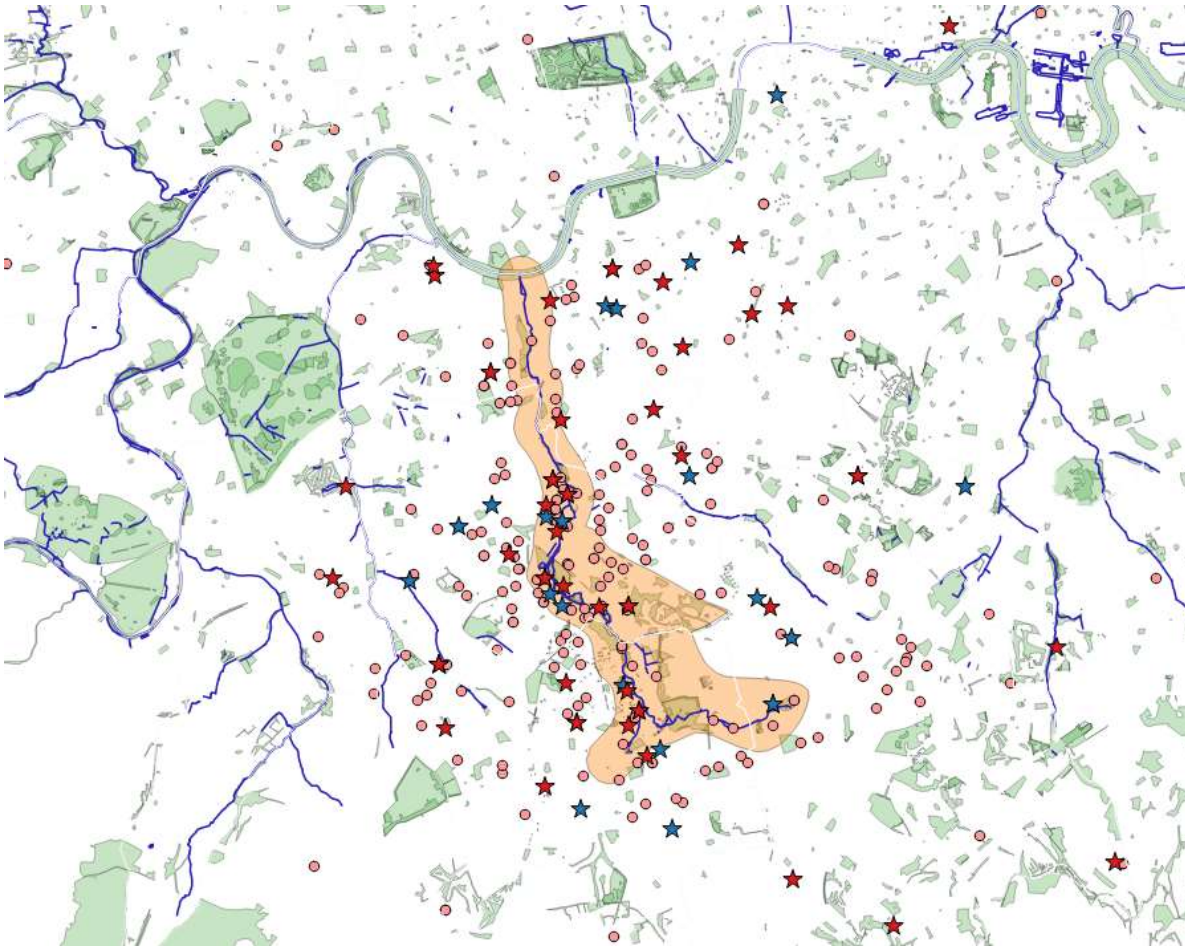


Figure 4 Postcode distribution of respondents to the final survey (red) and mid-delivery (blue star) surveys compared to the Wandle Watchers mailing list (orange circles). Survey respondents were asked only for the first part of their postcode so each star may represent multiple individuals.

1.3 Structure of this Report

Subsequent sections of this report:

- Examine the component elements of *LW* – what was actually done, and what was achieved and what its benefits have been for heritage and people (Section 2: Projects, outputs and outcomes)
- Consider the management of *LW* (Section 3: Governance, administration and delivery)
- Assess the enduring benefits of *LW* – both those of individual projects and of the scheme as a whole, and the lessons that may be learnt for future ‘landscape-scale’ schemes, particularly in urban areas (Section 4: Legacy)
- Briefly summarise the main findings of the report (Section 5: Conclusions).

The report includes a number of case studies and it concludes with the following appendices:

- Appendix 1: Evaluation context and methodology
- Appendix 2. Timeline and key stages
- Appendix 3. List of *LW* projects

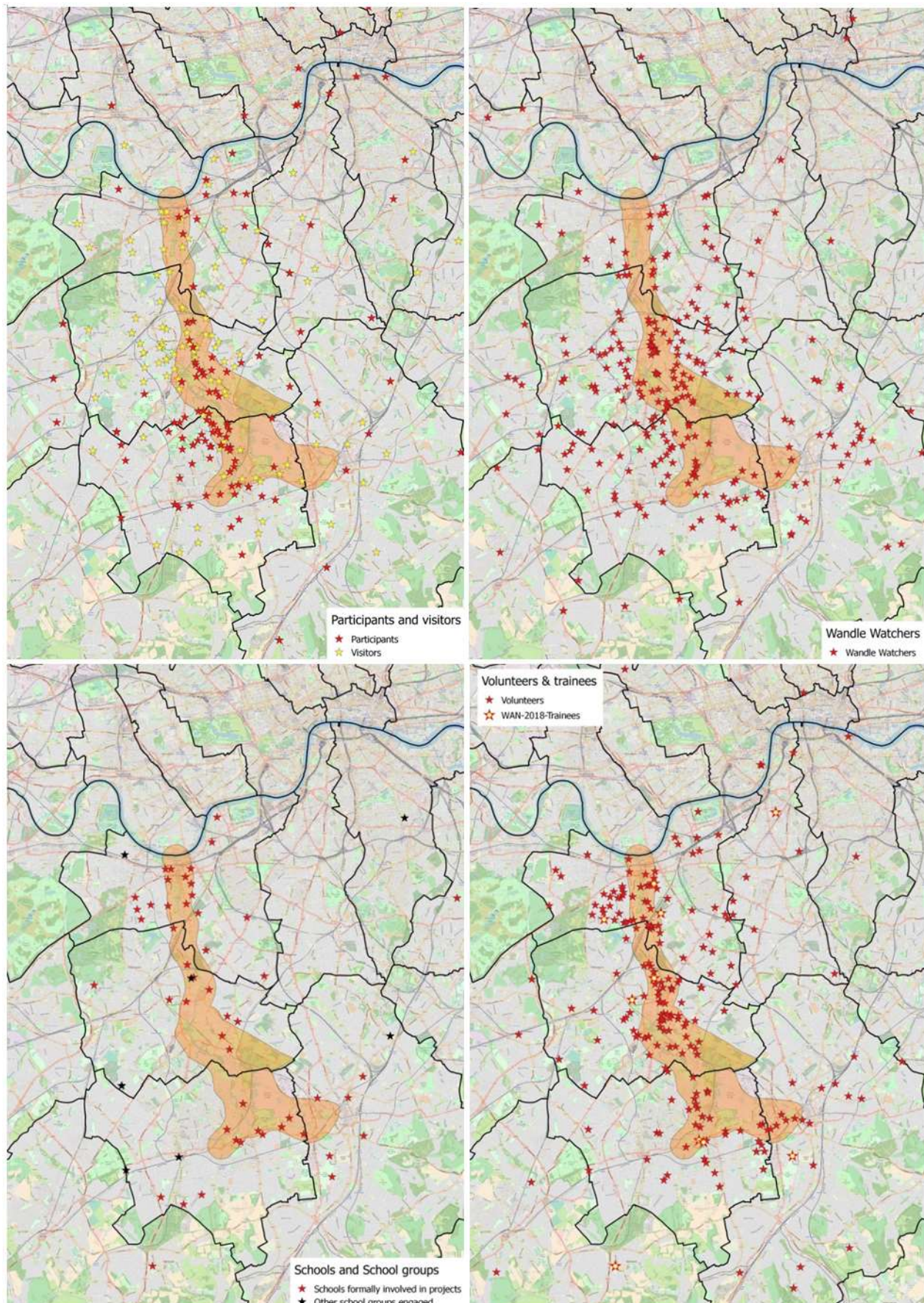


Figure 5 Distribution of different categories of individual and organisations engaged with *LW*. Each point may represent multiple records. In each category a limited number of points are located further afield.

2 Projects, outputs and outcomes

LW's nineteen principal projects represent a subset of over 100 proposed or existing projects in the ALGG's 'rolling list'⁽²⁾ adjusted and supplemented with additional smaller projects. These were devised through a programme of consultation with key stakeholders, to secure a distribution over the four London boroughs covering the Wandle's catchment, addressing HLF's four LP programme areas:

- A. Conserving or restoring the natural and built heritage
- B. Increasing community participation and engagement with local heritage
- C. Enhancing access to, and understanding of the landscape and its heritage
- D. Increasing training opportunities in local heritage skills.

Subsequent to LW's launch, further projects were added, supported by underspend or contingency, producing a total of over thirty funded projects, one of which was a mini-grant scheme introduced in the second half of delivery in connection with the annual Wandle Festival/ Fortnight.

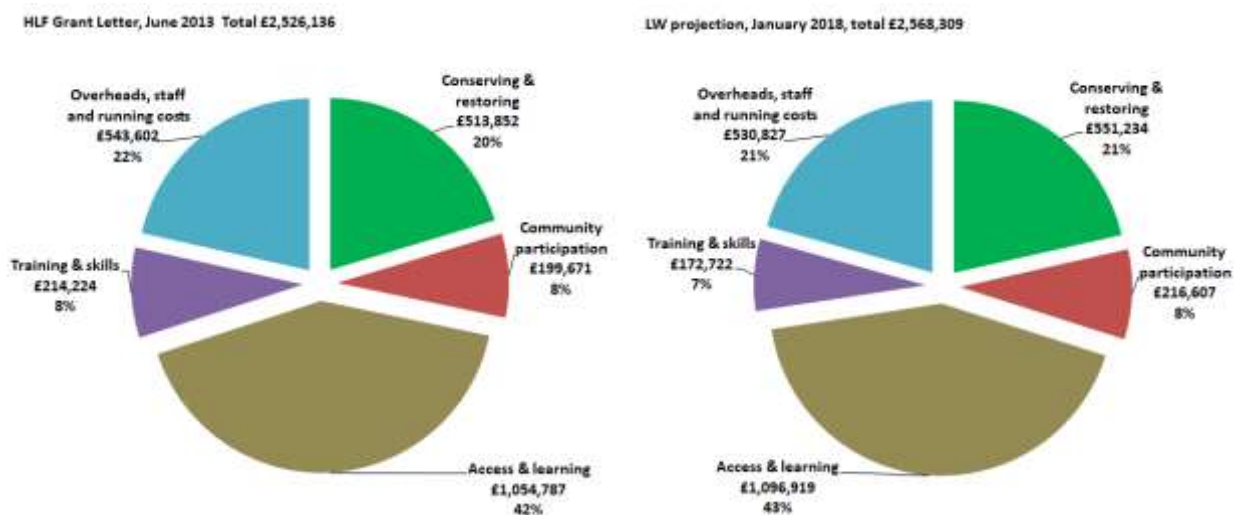


Figure 6 LW programme values (incl. match funding) approved June 2013 (left) and (right) final forecast January 2018

Despite the increase in project numbers the proportion of total costs allocated to projects in each of the five LW programme areas (including overheads, staff and running costs) in the approved LW budget and currently projected have remained relatively constant (Figure 6).

Most LW projects allocated to Programme A (conserving and restoring) are focused on the area's natural heritage (primarily the River Wandle and its associated habitats). Merton Priory Chapter House (MPCH), the single most costly project, (£431,250) and the only one involving physical works to archaeological and built heritage, appears in Programme C (access and learning); this was significantly delayed, and outputs during the life of LW will be primarily in relation to capital works.

One feature of the LW scheme is the concentration of cost both by project and by delivery partner. 60% of total initial project cost is accounted for by four projects which all consist primarily of capital works relating to the built or natural heritage: MPCH (22%), Catchment Plan Delivery/ River Rehab (16%), Wandle Gateways (12%) and MHP Wetlands (10%). These proportions have only marginally been reduced with the addition of later projects (Figure 7).

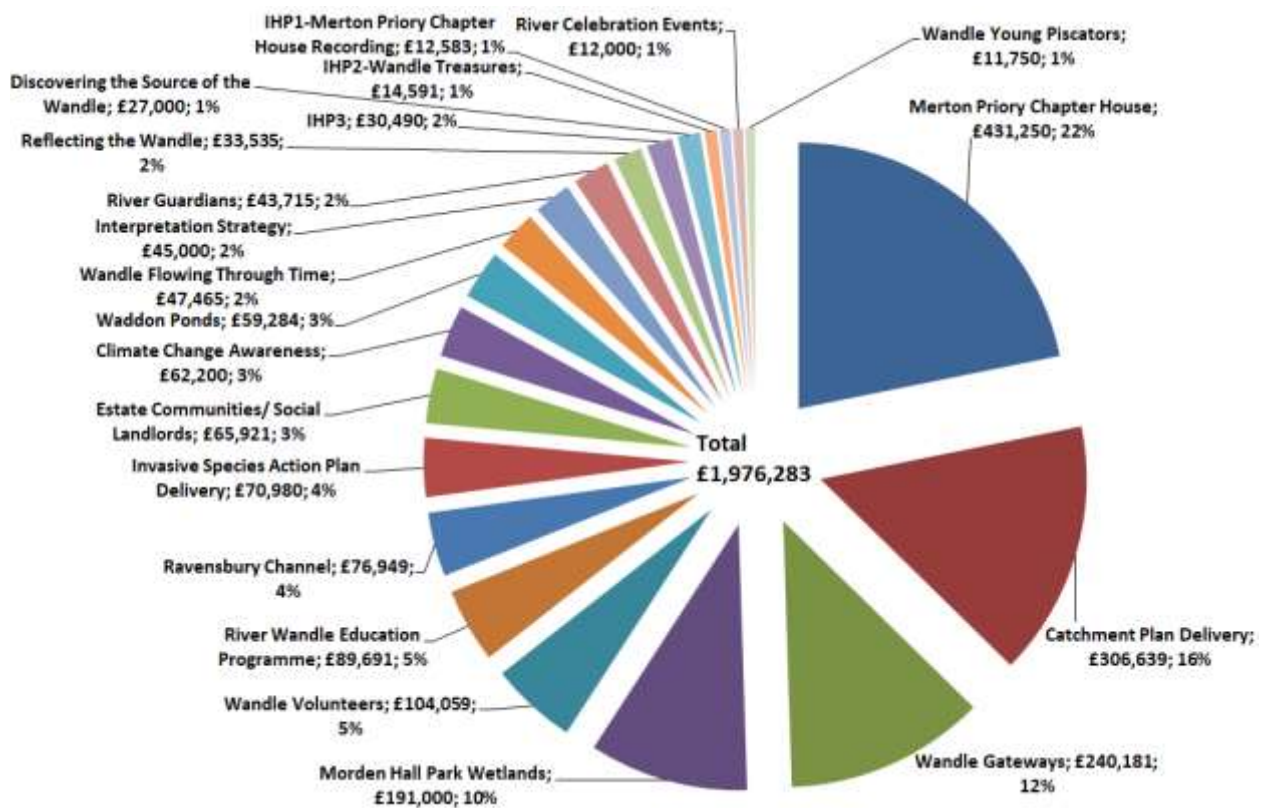
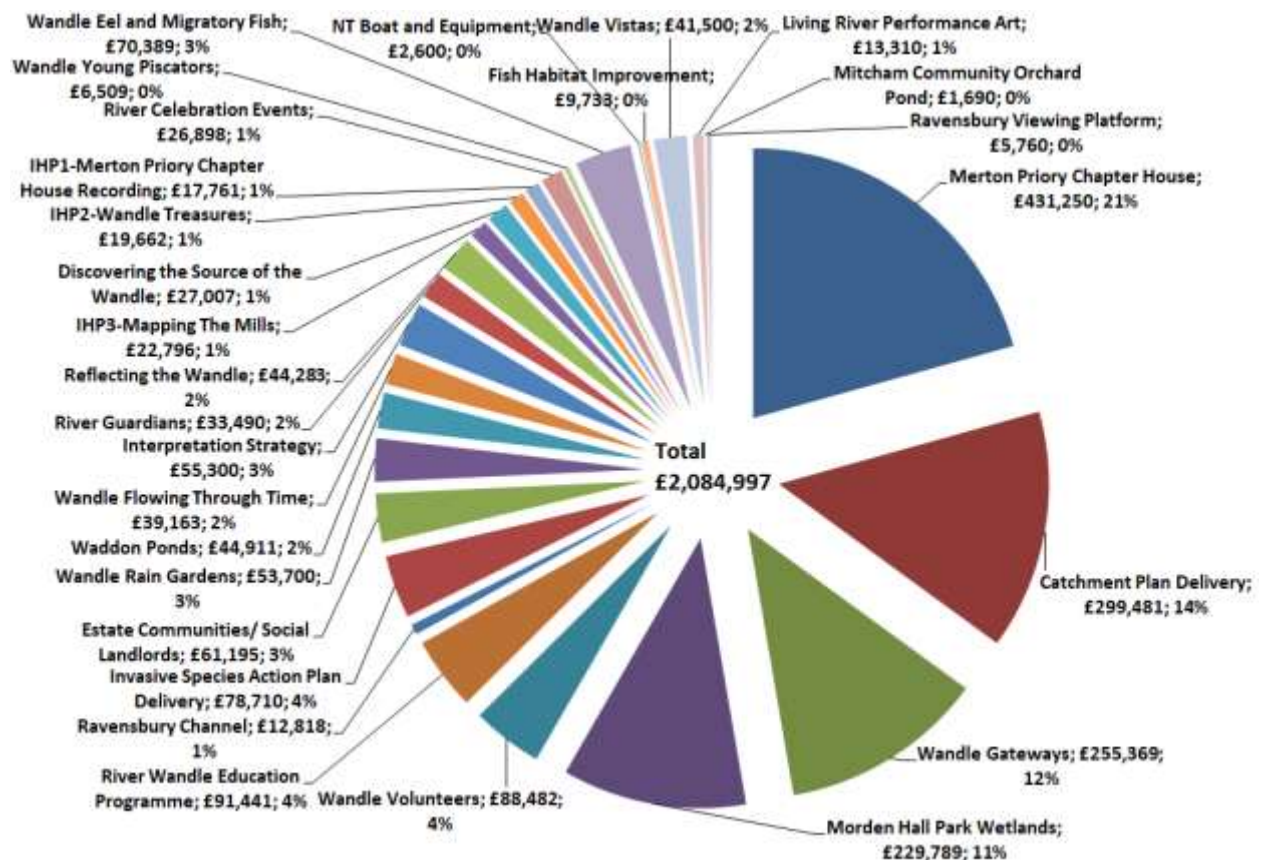


Figure 7 Approved project cost (including match funding) of the original (2013) 19 LW projects (above)⁽¹¹⁾ and (below) anticipated final spend on 33 projects as at January 2018.



One of the strengths of the *LW* scheme is the degree to which projects contribute across all four of HLF's programme aims. Almost all projects produce outputs in more than one programme area and several deliver in all of them. For example volunteers contribute significantly to all physical conservation works (directly in the case of habitat restoration and other works to the natural environment, and indirectly in the case of the Chapter House restoration) and most such works also include an important training component and feature events for the general public.

The remainder of this section focuses on *LW* project delivery, outputs and outcomes in relation to HLF's thematic aimsⁱ for the LP programme as follows:

- Conserving or restoring the natural heritage – biodiversity and ecosystem processes (Section 2.1)
- Conserving or restoring the historic and built heritage (Section 2.2)
- Increasing community engagement and participation in local heritage (Section 2.3)
- Enhancing access to, and understanding of the landscape area and its heritage (Section 2.4)
- Increasing training opportunities in local heritage skills (Section 2.5)
- Wider impacts (Section 2.6)

Each thematic section below starts with a list of projects allocated to that programme in the *LW* LCAP, together with the name of the lead partner and total project value (including volunteer time and match funding). Project titles prefixed by:

* = significant modification of project from S2 approval by HLF and

** = new project added during delivery

Each project title provides a link to the online *LW* legacy pages where more detailed project descriptions can be found. A full list of *LW* projects is provided in **Appendix 2** grouped by programme area as in the LCAP together with *LW* reference numbers.

Each section then proceeds to focus on outputs and outcomes across *all LW* project activity to date, irrespective of the programme area under which they are grouped. Headline OD represents a selection from the *LW* team's project monitoring aggregated across the whole *LW* programme. Assessment of outcomes and legacy is based on a variety of sources including: the end-of-project reports of *LW* partners and project leads; first-hand observations and interviews conducted by the IE; and the results of the online survey conducted between September and November 2017.

Appendix 3 of this report provides further details of the methodology adopted for this evaluation, an analysis of respondents to the online survey, including a demographic profile, information on their prior awareness of the Wandle and degree of involvement with different projects and, importantly, a caveat in relation to the representativeness of the survey responses reported below.

Codes used to identify survey and interview respondents are as follows:

PL = project lead or Partner representative; **V** = volunteer; **PA** = participant in one or more events or activities; **NP** = aware of *LW* but non participant; **NA** = unaware of *LW* until approached as part of this evaluation.

ⁱ Thematic aims specific to the LP Programme under HLF's third Strategic Plan (SP3, 2008 – 2013) during which *LW* was developed and approved. These map across to generic aims adopted for the current Strategic Framework (SF4) which apply to all HLF grant programmes.

Case study a. INNS – Partnering up to ensure “INNS MUST OUT!”

Natural Heritage



Invasive non-native plant species (INNS) are a problem on the Wandle as on many other rivers. A major problem is floating pennywort which forms extensive mats, excluding light; which reduces oxygen in the water, negatively affecting fish and invertebrates. Along the river banks, Japanese knotweed, Himalayan balsam and giant hogweed can form dense thickets, excluding other species and impeding access, and in the case of giant hogweed, pose a risk to human health.

LW's INNS project took forward the INNS Action Plan published in 2012 by

the Wandle Landscape and Biodiversity Group. Through meetings and workshops with key stakeholders, the INNS Action Plan was updated and revamped into an easy-to-use pdf accessible online, representing a good example of successful collaboration between local authorities, private sector landlords, the NT and community groups across the 4 London boroughs.



A volunteer team of 19 'River Rangers' were trained to identify and map the key species and another group of 6 'Hit Squad' volunteers gained professional licenses in safe application of pesticides as well as first aid, enabling them to operate under WT's insurance and without supervision. All INNS kit and personal protection equipment was bought through project budget and issued to volunteers, allowing them to organise their own working timetable without time constraints. The result is that INNS presence on the Wandle has been reduced and an INNS management plan is in place. Furthermore, the volunteers involved are able to view real-time mapping of their [survey work on the online map](#). The River Rangers and Hit Squad combined represent an achievable and effective case study for volunteer-led INNS management.

As to the future, Thames Water funding has been secured for WT's Water Catchments for Communities project which will continue INNS until 2020, as well as extending the activity to two new rivers. The volunteer-led monitoring will continue, however the intervention will become the responsibility of relevant landowners. If a local authority/private company landowner cannot undertake the works themselves (now a legal requirement for some species), the Hit Squad will be available for hire, thus also generating revenue to cover WT staff time. The Hit Squad will deal with INNS on certain private land (e.g. homeowner gardens) for free.

This project also links to the boat purchased for the NT at MHP. This has been used by INNS team at Watermeads to remove Floating pennywort and can also be borrowed by other groups needing access to water to remove INNS by hand.



2.1 Natural heritage – biodiversity and ecosystem processes

Projects

Four initial *LW* projects were grouped in the *LW* LCAP under this programme area. Underspend on some projects allowed the launch of several additional initiatives, focused on improving biodiversity of the river in line with aspirations of its Catchment Plan, as well as protecting features of the Wandle Valley's wider landscape:⁽¹²⁾

- [A1 Catchment Plan Delivery](#) — River restorations with volunteers (WT, £301k)
- [A2 Waddon Ponds](#) — Naturalisation and improved biodiversity of the ponds (LB Croydon, £45k)
- [A3 Ravensbury Channel](#) — River and wildlife improvements at Ravensbury Park (LB Merton, £77k)

Abandoned and replaced with:

- **** [A3 Wandle Eels](#)** — Installation and monitoring of eel passes on weirs (WT, £70k)
- [A4 Invasive Species Action Plan](#) — Control of invasive non-native species (INNS) (WT, £79k)
- **** [A4 NT Boat](#)** — Small boat and equipment to assist waterway management (NT, £2.6k)
- **** [A21 Fish Habitat Improvement](#)** — Installation of channel habitat improvements (EA, £10k)
- **** [A22 Wandle Vistas](#)** — Analysis, protection and celebration of vistas (Untitled Practice, £41.5k)

Headline outputs for natural heritage

Outputs delivered under this head by projects across the whole of the *LW* LP scheme include:

- 44Ha of land improved and better managed
- 6 separate river enhancements covering 1.2 km of river
- 7.6 km of river enhanced for wildlife through 20 clean ups removing over 60 tonnes of rubbish
- 6 eel pass projects and 2 reports created to address blockages to eels and migratory fish
- 1 pond restored
- 200m of new hedgerow planted
- 140 tonnes of Floating pennywort removed, 20 tonnes of Himalayan balsam bashed, 500 Giant hogweed plants destroyed, 900 stems of Japanese knotweed injected, and Parrots feather eradicated from the river
- 3 reports created addressing Canada goose numbers across the Wandle Valley
- 662 biological records created and stored
- Entire River brought under better management for INNS

Outcomes

Physical works to the natural heritage form part of a mosaic of activities — past, planned and in progress — led by the WT or by other organisations in the area both on adjacent sites and in some cases the same site. Catchment Plan Delivery - the largest habitat enhancement project (and the second largest of *LW*'s projects overall)— focused on selected areas of concern to the WT, delivering parts of its catchment plan⁽¹²⁾ for the river. Works appear to have been effective; fish passage improvements at Butter Hill and habitat restorations at Butter Hill and Hackbridge saw the return of trout recruitment in the Carshalton arm of the Wandle whose status has been upgraded to 'Good Ecological Potential' under the Water Framework Directive. The works have been well received by local residents and visitors.

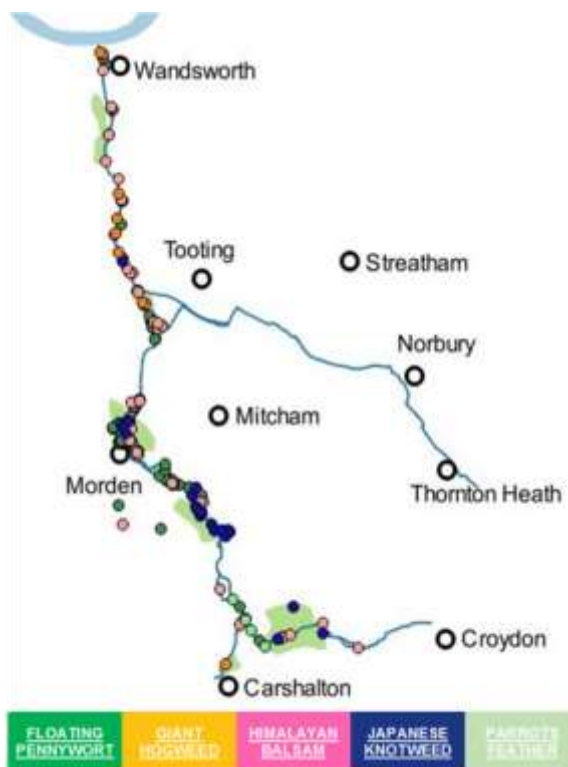


Figure 8 Presence of five INNS species on the Wandle (from the WT website)

INNS control has proceeded downstream from the upper reaches of the Wandle and has not yet been implemented on the lower reaches. All species, in particular Floating pennywort, have good powers of regeneration. A 10 year action planⁱ to help shape action on the ground beyond the lifetime of LW has been produced and it will be important to maintain the management programme, informed by annual mapping of INNS, and to keep the public informed of progress.

As with ongoing delivery of WT's Catchment Plan, continuing management of INNS will require funding from other sources as part of an ongoing WT programme.

Other projects such as the installation of migratory eel and fish passes (WT and Environment Agency), Waddon Ponds (LB Croydon), Fish Habitat Improvement (Environment Agency) and the boat and equipment purchased for the NT at MHP, engaged partners other than WT and focus on specific sites. Importantly, the boat purchased as

part of the MHP boardwalk project will be available in principle to other organisations managing Wandle wetlands as a community resource.

Ravensbury Park and Waddon Ponds were two contrasting 'naturalisation' projects. In Ravensbury Park, a designated Local Nature Reserve already with a significant 'natural' aspect and with a strong pre-existing Friends' group (FoRP), the proposed LW naturalisation of the main channel bank, intended to complement ongoing works undertaken by WT to the relief (back) channel had good local support. In the event tenders received for works suggested poor value for money, and following consultation with Friends of Ravensbury Park (FoRP) a viewing platform was installed instead (S 2.4 below). FoRP's support seems likely to prove a good guarantor of ongoing maintenance.

At Waddon Ponds, LW funded 'naturalisation' of ponds 2 & 3 supplements earlier (and separately funded) works to Pond 1. Anchored coir rolls pre-planted with marginal species appear to be establishing well. Earlier local hostility to 'naturalisation' (in part due to installation of mis-sized geese netting of pond 1 which was cut by local residents to free trapped birds) has not resurfaced, however it has proved difficult to secure significant community engagement and a planned Friends' group has failed to materialise. Local reactions to the work have varied:

"A hidden gem. I like the recent work that has clearly taken place as it has a natural feel to it."(NP, dog-walker)

"Waste of money. Who's going to look after it? That's what I want to know. Who'll maintain it? The Council's got no cash."(NP)

ⁱ The 10 year action plan can be accessed online via the WT website on www.wandletrust.org/action-plan.

One respondent queried the necessity of works to all three ponds, suggesting that the existing ‘Victorian’ aspect of Pond 3 had its own heritage value and was also a valuable recreational resource for children, the ‘hard’ banks (removed by the ‘naturalisation’) providing a valued base for launching model boats.

LB Croydon has produced a thorough management and maintenance plan for the ponds including baseline data and condition reports assembled prior to the commencement of habitat works. However internal restructuring within the Council has resulted in a significant reduction in staff resources (including the abolition of its greenspace lead officer post) available to deliver and monitor these works.

All LW habitat works exist in the midst of wider environmental changes and alongside other completed, ongoing and proposed initiatives including the de-culverting of the (previously undergrounded) Croydon source of the Wandle at Wandle Park (completed in 2012) and ongoing enhancements at Beddington Park (both funded by HLF and Big Lottery).

Future developments include the undertaking by Viridor to establish a nature reserve at Beddington Farmlands as part of its mitigation agreement relating to landfill operations and its (contested) application to build an incinerator on the site.

Beyond their impact on the landscape and wildlife, these works have undoubtedly served to raise public awareness of and commitment to the landscape, a process to which other LW projects have also contributed. One of the foremost of these is Wandle Vistas, which engaged community groups and volunteers in finding, researching and appraising views across the Wandle Valley through a number of training and fieldwork sessions. One outcome has been a technical report (to be published in 2018) including landscape character assessments of the ‘top 10’ vistas representative of the River catchment. It is hoped that this will help shape Local and Neighbourhood Plans to protect and manage the views into the future.

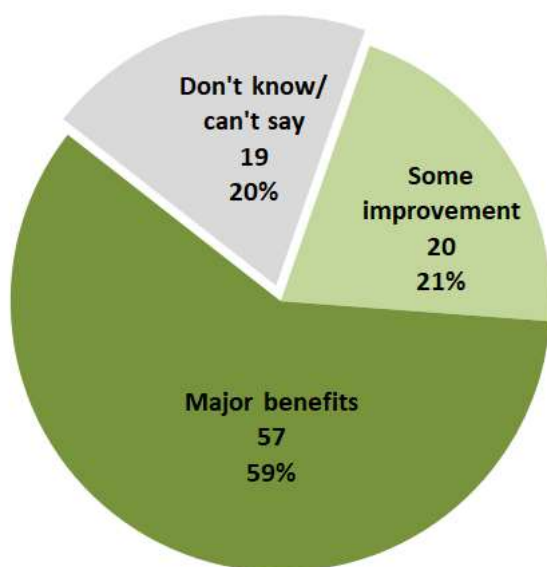


Figure 9 To what extent do you think Living Wandle has contributed to the conservation of water quality, habitats, wildlife, and the area's natural environment?

invasive species will help the river be more resilient and provided more habitats to enhance wildlife.”(PA)

Catchment Plan/ River Rehab riparian works at Butterhill and Hackbridge and other river improvements have been widely praised by local residents:

Anecdotal evidence from our interviews and survey, supplemented by site visits suggest that the immediate impact has been significant.

Some respondents made little distinction between LW funded projects and activities funded from other sources:

“There's no improvement to the water coming in to Wandle Park. It seems to have a lot of untreated sewage.”(NP)

Overall our assessment of the impact of physical works to natural heritage concurs with that of our interviewees and of survey respondents which has been overwhelmingly positive.

“The river itself - it is clean, vital and alive.”(V)

“Noticeable reduction in invasive non-native species on riverbank.”(PA)

“Renaturalisation of the river including removal of

“The rewilding of the river at Butterhill and Hackbridge has made a massive improvement of both habitat and wild life; I regularly see trout up stream of Butterhill where you would never see them before the work was completed. The kingfishers and grey wagtails are also much more prevalent.”(NP)

Volunteer engagement has been a particular feature of most habitat enhancement projects, producing reciprocal benefits

“Building the wonderful Eel Pass in MHP and training us volunteers to monitor it. Works well due to the look of the river plus hopefully an increase in biodiversity, and eel pass has increased our knowledge and awareness of eels generally.”(V)

As with all works involving natural heritage the surest guarantee of sustained benefit is the institutional commitment of statutory bodies and NGOs and ongoing community engagement. LW seems likely to have made a significant contribution in this respect.



Figure 10 Installing eel migration tiles at Garratt Lane and (inset) an eel monitoring box at MHP

Case study b. Catchment Plan Delivery – Communities dive in for river rehab Natural Heritage

This project, the second most costly of the LW programme, aimed to progress the WT's delivery of its catchment plan by focussing on three flagship projects:

At **Hackbridge**, following detailed flood modelling, four weirs were removed and 125m of river narrowed using bioengineering techniques. An island was regraded and a backwater created with 250 tonnes of gravel used to enhance geomorphology and habitat. Over 6000 plants were planted by volunteers!



At **Butter Hill**, a weir was reduced in height by 1m, the fish pass modified and the length of impounded river reduced by 150m. A total of 500m of river was narrowed and meandered with a low flow channel, berms, riffles, pools and marginal wetlands created along the length. Some 300 tonnes of gravel were added to restore geomorphology and volunteers planted 2000 plants and coppiced trees to enhance light penetration.

At the **Ravensbury Park Back Channel**, over 100m of toe boarding was removed, the bank renaturalised to create marginal habitat and a low flow channel created using faggot bundles and coir rolls. The new banks were planted up by local volunteers who also installed bat hotels and bird boxes in the surrounding green space.

Volunteers known as the 'River Rehab' team received training using the LW- financed EM River Flume to demonstrate river processes. Armed with new knowledge and skills, they developed their own ideas for river enhancements without the need for contractors, one of



which was selected for approval by the Environment Agency and subsequently delivered by the volunteers themselves!



At the Butter Hill site, post-project monitoring has shown significant enhancement of Brown trout populations. The River Rehab team are now a capable and skilled group of volunteers and have become ambassadors for this and similar projects elsewhere. Further funding has been secured which will ensure that the enhancements are maintained, another volunteer-led restoration on the Wandle will be delivered and additional similar work will take place on two new rivers!

"When I first saw the Butter Hill project, I thought it was an awful lot of effort for very little, to be honest. Didn't think it would be worth it. But it evolved and now you don't recognise the river. In the 60s it was a dead river, I remember it being red, green, black, yellow. But now you get fish and it is wonderful."(V)

2.2 Historic and built heritage

Merton Priory Chapter House (MPCH) is certainly the most important archaeological site in the Wandle Valley and probably also in the whole of London. Hitherto an archaeological 'hidden treasure', little known and not regularly opened to the public, it is grouped in the LCAP⁽¹⁾ (and in Appendix 2) under the theme of Access and Learning. It is dealt with here as the only *LW* project addressing physical conservation of the area's historic heritage.

Outcomes

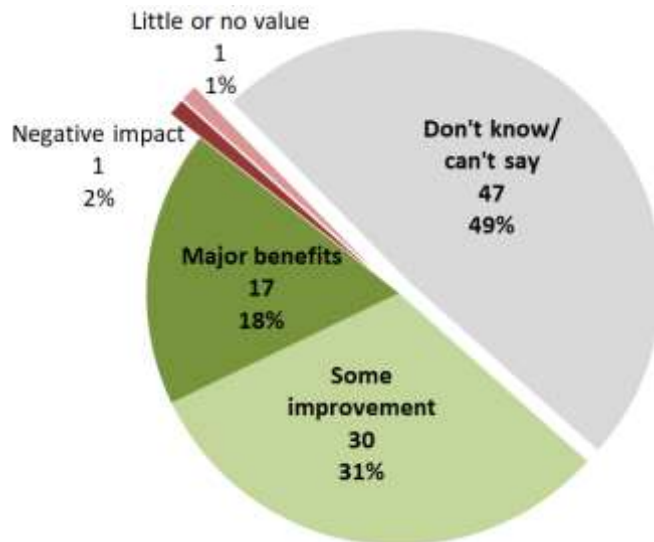


Figure 11 To what extent do you think Living Wandle has contributed to the conservation of the area's historic or built features?

That almost half of all survey and interview respondents were unable to comment on the benefits of *LW* to historic heritage may reflect the delay in commissioning works to MPCH. However the fact that a similar proportion perceived some or major benefits seems likely to reflect a recognition of the indirect contribution of other projects to the physical built and historic heritage of the area. These are considered under sections below, including Community engagement and participation, Access, learning and understanding, and Training and skills.

Following successful completion, stewardship of MPCH by the Merton Priory Trust (MPT) is likely to be the best guarantor of long-term benefits to these very significant remains.

There is a commitment by the Trust not just

to maintaining their accessibility but to developing an extensive programme of educational activities and community engagement which will more than justify HLF's investment – and the considerable support in cash and in kind that the project has received from other sources, not least the MPT itself.

Beyond the importance of works in themselves, the 'value added' through delivery as part of *LW* will depend on the degree to which MPCH can be promoted (together with the data assembled as part of the Industrial Heritage Recording projects) as part of the area's mosaic of archaeological and built heritage.

The MCPH project is itself an early substitute for the originally proposed restoration of Ravensbury Mill under a Section 106 agreement with its owner, as a home for the Wandle Industrial Museum. This had to be repeatedly shelved because of technical issues and lack of time on the part of Merton Council but it is still hoped that the proposal will not be lost altogether.

Alongside the Chapter House a number of other projects have the potential to contribute directly to the understanding and conservation of physical historic and cultural heritage of the catchment. These include Mapping the Mills and Wandle Treasures, both part of the Industrial Heritage Recording project. The ongoing engagement of local heritage bodies, in particular the Wandle Industrial Museum will be central to this.

Case study c. Merton Priory Chapter House – Bringing to light an ancient relic

Built Heritage



The foundations of the Chapter House of Merton Priory, adjacent to Merton Abbey Mills, are all that remains of what was once one of England's most important ecclesiastical centres. It was where the Statute of Merton (1235, the first such statute in English Law.) was signed by Henry III and his barons.

The Priory was sacked by Henry VIII in 1536 and most of the remains are now buried beneath the car park of the nearby Sainsbury's. The Chapter House foundations themselves remained preserved under the A24 Merantun Way - largely unknown and inaccessible except on special occasions when they are displayed to the public by volunteers from MPT. This LW project represents phase 1 of a 2 phase project to develop this site into an important visitor attraction. LW funded capital



works include replacing the existing south wall with a glass wall and visitor entrance, plus domestic facilities which will permit more regular opening and its eventual use as a multi-function event venue to ensure its long-term sustainability.



The project was developed by MPT and LB Merton has acted as the client, match funding 53% of project value. Initially intended to be delivered and operational in 2015, challenges have caused severe delays meaning the expected completion date is April 2018. The primary challenges included: cost inflation required that the designs be revised several times to fit within budget, staff cuts in LB Merton (an absence of an individual directly responsible for the project) delayed the tendering process and a lack of contact with neighbouring landowners has hampered access to site facilities.

Works commenced on-site in November 2017 after Marcus Beale Architects generously provided one of their staff to oversee the project and manage the contractors. Once complete the impact will be significant as this major

archaeological site will be accessible again and more widely known within Merton's heritage.

Prior to the start of works, MPT volunteers continued to open the site to visitors during the LW scheme and their activities have received significant publicity. In addition, MPT are coordinating the production of an online teacher resource pack and supplementary education film for a younger audience, both of which were funded through LW's volunteer training plan. These resources complement the MPCH documentary created earlier by volunteers as part of the Industrial Heritage Recording project.



2.3 Community engagement and participation

Projects

- [B5 Wandle Flowing Through Time](#) — Capture oral histories of the Wandle (GW, £39.1k)
- [B6 Social Landlords](#) — Wandle activities for residents of social and sheltered housing (LWT, £61.2k)
- [B7 Discover the Source](#) — Exploration of river sources for walks leaflets and exhibition (WT, £27.9k)
- [B8 Vandalis](#) — Dramatised film about the Wandle, from prehistory to the present (GW, £44.3k)
- *[B9 River Celebrations](#) — Events celebrating the Wandle and the LW LP (Various, £26.9k)
- *[B10 Piscators](#) — Youth angling, coaching and 1st Wandle Fishing Guide (Wandle Piscators, £6.5k)
- **[B24 Living River](#) — Promenade performances by local teenagers (Battersea Arts Centre, £13.3k)

Headline outputs for community engagement and participation

Outputs delivered under this head by projects across the whole of the LW LP scheme include:

- 2,659 participants in 2017 Wandle Fortnight with £3,140 grants, funding 22 events
- 1,198 Wandle Watchers - people and organisations being kept up to date with Wandle news
- 5 festivals, within which there were 210 individual events
- 1,192 activities and events attended or delivered by partners
- 511 businesses have benefitted from the programme
- 20,983 people are more committed to, or newly aware of the Wandle
- 112 publications produced, with 59,918 copies in circulation
- An audience of at least 1.2m reached online

Outcomes

An evaluation of two early completed projects — **Wandle Flowing Through Time** (WFFT) and **Reflecting the Wandle** (RtW) Vandalis — was conducted in autumn 2015. Participant testimony indicates significant engagement and perceived benefits on the part of participants (including the 10 oral historians and 43 respondent interviewees of WFFT and the 21 volunteer producers and 68 individuals in the cast of RtW). Although the number of responses to the evaluation questionnaire was limited (12) most participants in both projects said that they had enjoyed the experience and that they had benefitted significantly themselves.



Figure 12 the WFFT recruiting poster

The film 'Vandalis' resulting from RtW has been acclaimed as a technically excellent production involving 'first-time' young actors although reactions to the content have been variable, particularly on the part of local community organisations to whom it has been shown.



Figure 13 Three posters produced for RtW the initial flier soliciting interest, the invitation to volunteers, and advertising the film 'Vandalis' that resulted.

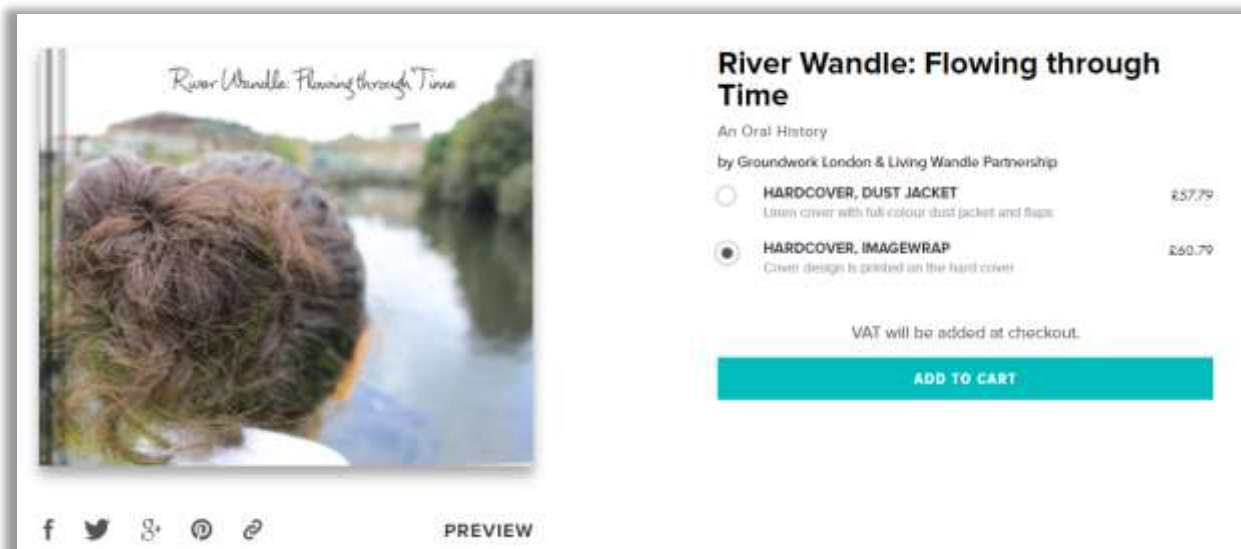


Figure 14 The price of the - excellently produced – collection of oral histories from WFTT will be beyond the pockets of most, however the pdf is downloadable from the LW website.

'Discovering the Source' aimed to engage local residents and interest groups via archive and other research on the history of the local landscape in Carshalton and Croydon, where the two current sources of the Wandle are considered to be.

Engagement was low, however the targets for volunteer value were achieved through 2 committed individuals.

Guided walks delivered for the local community were well attended, the pop-up exhibition has toured 2 local libraries and 4 community hubs and the 3 guided walk leaflets have received good uptake and remain a resource for future use.



The **Estate Communities/ Social Landlords** project focused on diversity and inclusion. This was aimed at hard to reach communities and hitherto under-represented groups through their landlords (ten Registered Providers) and residents associations. The project engaged 531 people, but this was far less than hoped for as engagement is complex through these structures; more success was achieved through community centres. Changes in landlords' staff didn't help matters, and more consistent support from all of the boroughs could have helped increase the project's reach. The project's aspirations, in hindsight, were overly ambitious and whilst the project did make good progress towards the end, there was too little time to develop a sustained legacy; it is probably best characterised as a partially successful pilot which has demonstrated the need – and potential – for more systematic and sustained engagement.



Figure 15 Joint Estate Communities fishing event with Piscators Angling Club in Ravensbury Park, Sept 2015

"Project did not engage nearly enough people. This was aimed at hard to reach communities which made it very difficult to engage, but maybe the wrong organisation was leading the project and the aims were too ambitious from the start."(PL)

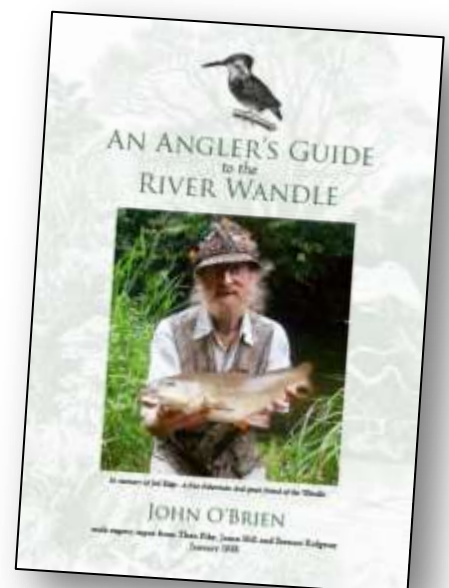
A variety of river and nature-based activities on estates were linked to outdoor sessions - bat walks, arts and crafts, visits to green spaces, walks, talks and quizzes – and the Piscators angling club took families fishing in Ravensbury Park. A directory of Registered Providers has been assembled and good links established with the main RPs in the Valley, which could be built upon in the future. Several respondents articulated their aspirations in this regard:

"I have a son with Asperger's and am well aware of the gaps in provision for these adults and children (education, social, sporting, etc.) and would like to see more involvement with local disabled groups, e.g. working opportunities in a community cafe; providing cycle hire, training and safe routes for disabled children to give them a sense of independence."(PA)

The aim of **Wandle Piscators** - the smallest of all the initial LW projects - was to inspire young people to get involved with responsible angling on the Wandle and informally learn about sustainable fishing and the wildlife of the river. This project was curtailed on the tragic death of the Piscators' Chair in September 2016. However two volunteer coaches have been trained, a number



of events held for interested young people (including one in association with the Social Landlords project) and the first fishing guide to the Wandle has been produced.



Living River Performance Art, an additional project added late in *LW*'s delivery proved successful in engaging teenagers and young adults, many of them previously unaware and most uninvolved with the river, in original promenade performances presented publicly and also recorded on film.

Case study d. Living River – Creative connections to an underground river

Community

Added during delivery of *LW*, the Living River project was a collaboration with Battersea Arts Centre's 'Homegrown' initiative, which links young people aged 16-29 to professional artists to be creative, learn new skills and make original performance. The aim was to engage young people with the (predominantly culverted) river in Wandsworth through a series of creative workshops from May – September 2017, culminating in an original outdoor promenade performance. Targeted directly at teenagers and young adults from black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee communities, in part to redress a perceived imbalance in *LW*'s existing community links, the majority of participants came from disadvantaged backgrounds and were students on free school meals or not in employment, education or training (NEET).



Through exploring the rich heritage of the Wandle, the 20 young performers created original song, storytelling and spoken-word poetry that celebrated the built and natural environment. Live performances were delivered on 29 July 2017, with an additional performance as part of Wandle Fortnight 2017. [A film was also produced as part of the project](#), ensuring that the Living River lives on!

All 20 performers said they learnt new things about the local area and local history and based on the organiser's conversations with participants, their families and other audience members, it is estimated that around 90% of those involved were newly engaged with the River Wandle. On top of which, everyone said they all felt prouder about where they live and are more likely to go to the river..

"Honestly, I'd never heard about it before [the Wandle]. I think about where I live as really like a city place, and so it was weird to find out we had a river... It made all of us want to protect it a bit because there are so many ugly parts to where we live but the river is really pretty."

"I didn't know much about the River Wandle. The project has given me and my friends a new place to go and also I now know that I am also responsible for the upkeep of the river."

"My daughter is really shy but seeing how well she worked with the group and performing in front of people she isn't familiar with was a highlight for me."

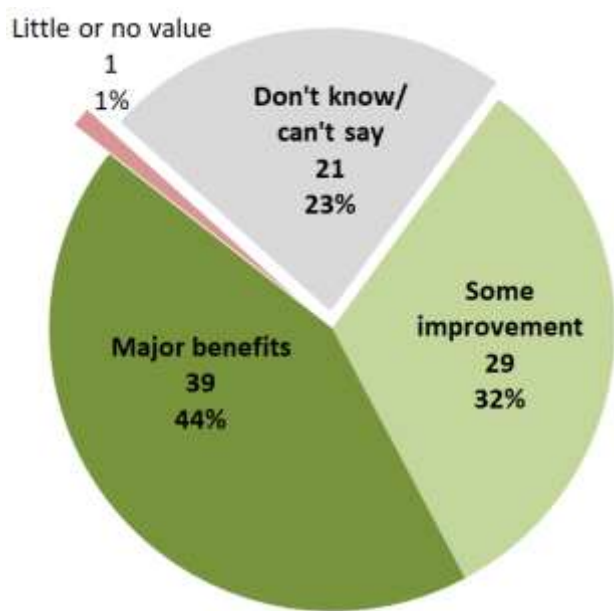
Case studies showed a significant impact on some of the performer/ participants; one said:



"Mainly for me it was growing my confidence. And just meeting a whole new group of people was a good thing. I only really know people from youth club or school so this was a really new experience, like, really really new, in lots of ways."

"My mum really liked the show and she's never seen me act or anything. Also [the project lead] really pushed me to write more poems and raps, and I even managed to help write the final Wandle song so I felt like he really listened to my talents I was trying to grow."

River Celebrations enabled the support of a variety of events relating to the river and its catchment. These included the *LW* Launch Event 2013, Living Wandle Festival 2014, Wandle September 2015, Wandle Fortnights 2016 and 2017 and the *LW* final celebrations in 2017 — including a volunteer ‘thankyou’ BBQ and the *LW* final conference. The 2016 Wandle Fortnight, organised by the *LW* team, included a microgrants scheme available to local organisations to assist them in promoting festival activities, administered through the WVF. In 2017 WVF took the lead in organising the annual event and again administered a microgrants scheme with projects selected by a committee of community representatives using a larger pot of money funded through *LW*. This provided a significant organic link between *LW* and local community groups.



The *LW* scheme has done well to deliver a variety of projects which have participation and engagement as their focus. Inevitably the results have been variable, particularly in relation to the number of individuals involved and as ever it is difficult to estimate the longer term benefits or multiplier effects that they have produced.

All of them however have received positive endorsement from their participants and similarly enthusiastic comments are typical of survey respondents in relation to all *LW* projects including INNS control and other habitat works, where a majority of participants see benefits to their communities as well as to the environment and plan themselves to be involved in legacy activities.

Figure 16 To what extent do you think Living Wandle has improved community participation and encouraged people's engagement?



Figure 17 Gateways community planting day, November 2017

Case study e. River Celebrations – Wandle fun by & for the community

Community

River Celebrations included a varied programme of community based events over the *LW* delivery period. The Wandle Valley Festival delivered the very successful *LW* launch event at MHP in 2013, which notably involved over 900 people taking part in activities along, but also within the river itself.

The long-running Wandle Valley Festival closed in early 2014 because of unsustainable funding and organisational challenges. The *LW* team, recognising the importance of an annual event, initiated the September 2014 'Living Wandle Festival' at Merton Abbey Mills.

This was followed in September 2015 by 'Wandle September' which coordinated a variety of local events run by different organisations within a wider programme linked to 'Totally Thames' and 'Tidefest'.



In 2016 a community micro-grants scheme was incorporated into the annual celebration, after a call for new *LW* projects (to be funded by underspend) resulted in lower than anticipated numbers of proposals from community groups (6 out of 25). 'Wandle Fortnight' was delivered in the September in partnership with the WVF who coordinated the micro-grants; enabling 9 community groups to upscale their events and activities for the benefit of local people.

'Wandle Fortnight' was repeated in September 2017 by the WVF, supported by a larger sum of *LW* micro-grants and additional funding from local firms L&Q and Goldcrest Land. 22 out of 23 applications were

funded, with activities ranging from a grant of £30 for children's block printing during Merton Priory's open weekend, through to £150 for yoga meditation, walking and refreshments for disadvantaged ethnic minority communities in MHP. Over 70+ community-led events were successfully delivered, driven by publicity through distribution of 5,000 leaflets and a host of social media posts reaching over 4,500 individuals, resulting in a total of over 2,000 event participants overall.

Other events supported under the River Celebrations project include Volunteer Celebration events in June 2016 and September 2017, and the concluding Living Wandle Conference in October 2017 – at which the [Living Wandle film](#) was premiered.

River Celebration has thus successfully enabled experimentation with different formats of public events to promote *LW* and celebrate the area's heritage. With the end of HLF/*LW* funding, the WVF will be seeking new forms of sponsorship from local business and other sources, to deliver activities and aid publicity for Wandle Fortnight (already planned for 8 – 23 September 2018). It will be important that WVF and the WVRPT work together to coordinate activities and avoid competition or duplication of efforts.



2.4 Access, learning and understanding

Projects

- [*C11 Gateways](#) — Access improvements and branded signage at key greenspaces (WVRPT, £255k)
- [*C12 Merton Priory Chapter House](#) — Improve access and services (LB Merton and MPT, £431k)
- [*C13 MHP Boardwalk](#) — Installation of boardwalk plus park and river enhancements (NT, £229.8k)
- [**C13 MHP Wetlands Learning](#) — Supporting schools/public with equipment (NT, £21.7k)
- [C14 River Education](#) — Educating school children inside and outside the classroom (WT, £91.4k)
- **C15 Industrial Heritage Recording** — This project was divided into three modules:
 - [*M1: MPCH Documentary](#) — Short volunteer film of the MPCH story – past and present (GW, £17k)
 - [M2: Wandle Treasures](#) — Creation of large hand-drawn heritage map (Building Exploratory, £19.6k)
 - [M3: Mapping the Mills](#) — Researching mills for self-guided maps (Building Exploratory, £22.7k)
- ***C16 Interpretation Strategy** — An interpretation and communications strategy delivered through three sub-projects (LW team, £56.9k):
 - [*Web Pages and Digital Archive](#) — Online presence via the WVRP website (WVRPT, £41.1k)
 - [*Wandle Watchers Twinning](#) — Wildlife recording (and more) with many volunteer groups (£6.9k)
 - [**Confluence: The River Speaks](#) — Audio-visual Wandle art project (ELC, £5.5k)
- [**C25 Mitcham Community Orchard & Gardens](#) — Interpretation and equipment (MCOG, £1.7k)
- [**C26 Ravensbury Pond Platform](#) — Installation of viewing platform (LB Merton and FoRP, £5.7k)

Headline outputs for access, learning and understanding

Outputs delivered under this head by projects across the whole of the LW LP scheme include:

- 11 physical access improvements implemented and 10 view points documented
- 54 schools engaged with 8,226 school students involved in some way
- 5 school learning resources created and accessible on line
- 494 items uploaded into the digital archive
- 232 photographs entered into the LW photograph competition
- 1 oral history project with 660 participants
- 14,477 young people involved across the programme.
- 1,198 Wandle Watchers kept up to date with Wandle news

Outcomes

Covering physical and intellectual access, this is the most varied programme in the LW scheme. Wandle Gateways is one of the most significant LW capital projects in relation to its longer-term ambitions in contributing to an integrated vision for the area, but was also one of the least developed projects in the LCAP and WVRPT has done well to persist in delivery. Issues of branding and permissions have delayed delivery of all Gateways but seven Gateways are on track for completion

within the lifetime of the scheme; two each at Colliers' Wood (Merton), Poulter Park (Merton and Sutton), Waddon Ponds (Croydon), and one at Trewint Street (Wandsworth)

Only two of the Gateways have been delivered entirely within LW – those at Waddon ponds (which tie

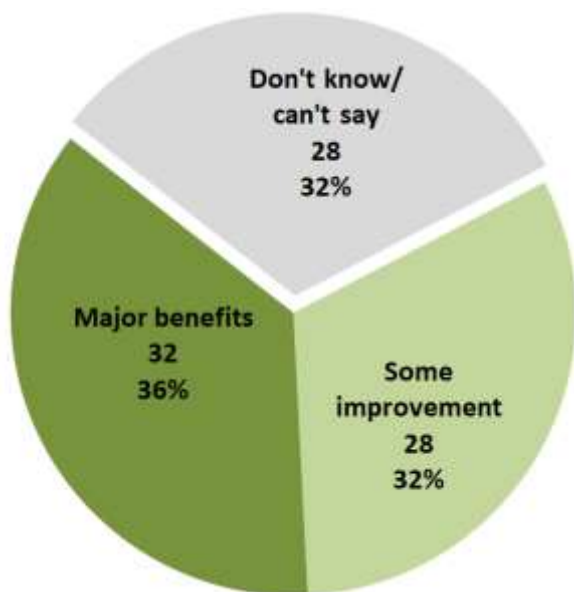


Figure 18 To what extent do you think Living Wandle has improved people's access to the area or facilitated their enjoyment of it?

into the pond naturalisation undertaken through LW) and at Trewint Street. Others, including those at Poulter Park which were delivered as part of the Mayor's Big Green Fund initiative (2015) have been through other funding streams.

There is evidence that the improvements are already much appreciated by local residents. However their future significance is vitally connected to wider green infrastructure improvements across the valley.

"Watermeads is now much more accessible, safer and regulated."(NP)

"I have recently started going to Waddon Ponds [...] I have to say it is an absolute gem, and such a contrast to the way I had thought of Waddon before visiting. A hidden gem. I like the recent work that has clearly taken place as it has a natural feel to it. The play park and other areas are well used by families with children, and have been every time I have visited."(NP)

In general there has been praise — often linked to river and riparian improvements — for all access works (not all necessarily LW funded):

"I live in Hackbridge, and now know that I can walk to Waddon Ponds via Beddington Park, so it has opened up a whole green corridor for me, which I really like. It is good for my health and I have lost a little weight, partly as a result of more walking."(NP)

"The Wandle Trail has been transformed. It was a quiet overgrown narrow footpath often not very near the Wandle. Now it's a joy - and is well used - accessible, shared use, scenic and close to the river."(NP)

While the Gateways project is focused on catchment-wide physical access, the MPCH project (S 2.2 above) aims to improve access, engagement and learning to the area's most significant archaeological resource. Work finally commenced in November 2017 and is not yet complete, so it is difficult to do other than predict the longer term benefits of the scheme. These should be significant though not without risk, since there will be ongoing maintenance costs and opening of remains to visitors will be dependent on volunteers. However the commitment of MPT and its volunteers should ensure that intellectual and physical access targets are met.

Following consultation the route of the boardwalk at MHP was changed significantly in order to facilitate access (and management) without the threat to habitat quality and nesting birds posed by the initial proposals. Now successfully installed and much in use, it has received general praise. The engagement of NT volunteers (including a 'Wednesday Wetlands Group') together with the NT's own stewardship should ensure that benefits are long-term.

"Lovely space for walking, wildlife watching and relaxing in the park. The area is much more accessible - and safer for little ones."(PA)

Other access improvements include the Ravensbury Pond Viewing Platform (added during the life of LW in place of the abandoned channel enhancements) has received qualified praise:

"It's fantastic, but I have regrettably stood on the platform hearing people say what a waste of money and it will be a waste if we lose the lake to silt."(PA, local community activist)

"Fine. It's just a shame the other paths are not wheelchair accessible to get to it."(PA, member of FoRP)

The transformation of a derelict site on Fieldgate Lane into Mitcham Community Orchard & Garden, funded by Sustainable Merton and Merton Council was boosted by LW's funding of an interpretation board (designed and installed by volunteers) and a projecting stereo microscope to capture images of pond wildlife for visiting local schools and residents' groups.

River Education (retitled 'Project Kingfisher') with its components 'Creatures in the Classroom' (indoor) and (field-based) 'Window on the Wandle' both directed at school children has receive universal and unqualified acclaim from teachers and parents alike. There has been good uptake from schools both in Wandsworth and in neighbouring Boroughs and it is expected that activities will continue beyond the end of LW — and expand to Beverley Brook and Hogsmill rivers — with the aid of funding from The Gregg's Foundation.

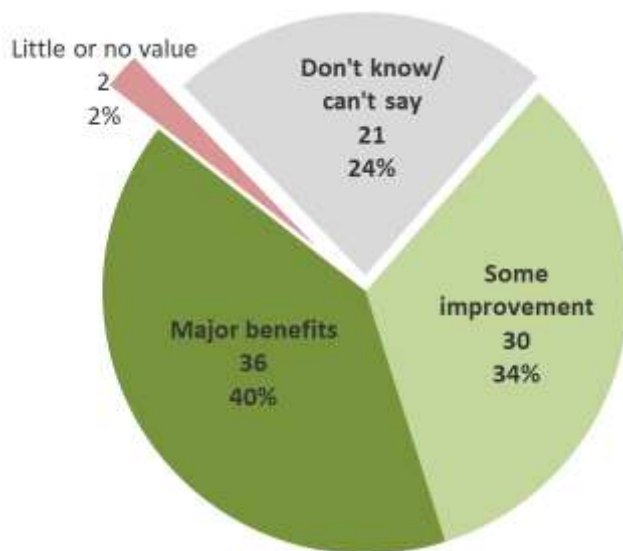


Figure 19 To what extent do you think Living Wandle has helped people to learn about the area and improved their understanding of it?

"Engaging children with their local environment, learning about the history of the Wandle [...] the importance of rivers and wildlife and how to look after our local environment and why it's important."(PA)

Three projects under Industrial Heritage Recording were all contracted out to third parties based outside the LW area.

Delays to the MPCH project have meant that the Chapter House Documentary — initially intended to be a participatory volunteer-based 'before', 'during' and 'after' photographic and video record is limited to a presentation of background to and a description of the proposed works. While of value in its own right (the video will be shown during open days in what will become the MPCH community museum) the project also illustrates the inflexibility of contracted third-party project delivery.

'Mapping the Mills' involved a total of 38 volunteers in archive research, digitisation, documentation, leading guided walks and promoting understanding of Wandle's mills. Beyond the skills acquired by participants, four walks were produced, tested and are due to be published in a printed map and online as part of the Wandle Library.

Wandle Treasures has produced a useful assemblage of physical and virtual information sheets and a map launched at the 2017 Merton Arts Festival and illustrated on the printed Festival programme. The map has 'toured' the four boroughs and a permanent location is being sought. Several of the audio-visual productions (including Wandle Treasures and Living River) are on [LW's YouTube channel](#).

These projects complement others, such as Wandle Vistas, with production of a series of maps for local people to use to explore the landscape and valley's heritage.



Some form of learning was inherent in most projects, but *LW*'s River Education programme developed and delivered educational material linked to the national curriculum to local school children from Early Years (4 years) to Year Nine (15 years). In total over 50 schools (including two SEND schools) and some 8,000 children were at some point engaged through three elements:

- ***Creatures in the Classroom*** brought the river into the school, housing a variety of river species in tanks. 120 sessions were run in which children learnt about life cycles, habitats and food chains. They also gained greater understanding of their local river, which really hit home when the creatures were released back into the Wandle!
- ***Window on the Wandle*** took the classroom to the river. During 133 sessions, children took part in lots of river related games and activities.
- ***Assemblies and class presentations*** involved interactive themed presentations telling stories about the river.



Delivered by an *LW* funded Education Officer, the project

also trained two freelance teachers, ran four INSET sessions and designed three National Curriculum education packs to allow teachers to deliver similar sessions themselves.

On the back of this project, the WT has successfully won further funding from the Greggs Foundation continue education work on the Wandle and start the programme on two new rivers.

Overall, the project provides a good learning example for future river education initiatives.



2.5 Training and skills

Projects

- [*D17 Wandle Rain Gardens](#) — Engaging RSL residents with rainwater management (LWT, £53.7)
- [D18 River Guardians](#) — River clean-ups and volunteer training for pollution incidents (WT, £33.5k)
- [D19 Wandle Volunteers](#) — Budget for training and other community activities (LW team, £88.5k)

Headline outputs for training and skills

Outputs delivered under this head by projects across the whole of the LW LP scheme include:

- 155 training courses, delivered 2383 days of learning to 3299 people
- 198 people gained accredited qualifications
- 284 individual active volunteers contributed at least 1077 volunteer days equivalent to £105,000 in value across all projects.

Outcomes

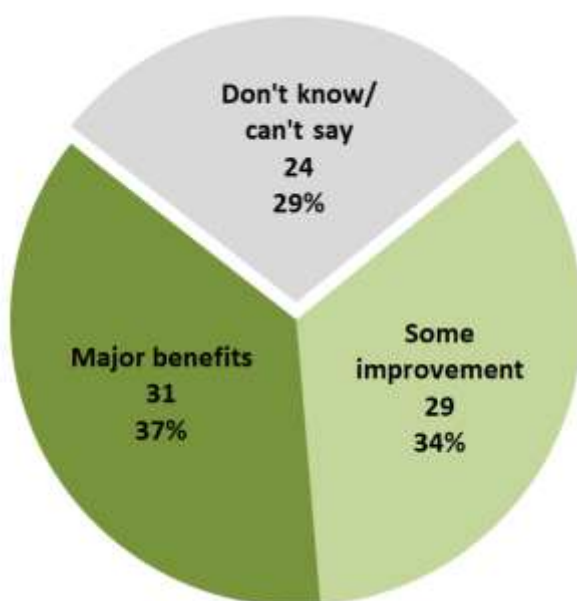


Figure 20 To what extent do you think Living Wandle has improved training opportunities and people's skills related to natural, built or historic heritage?

Arising from the Volunteer Training Plan produced in LW's development phase,⁽¹³⁾ much of LW's volunteer programme has a significant focus on training.

In addition most projects and much of LW's community-related activity include an element of skills acquisition, from film-making/ acting and oral history to reed bed management and freshwater invertebrate identification.ⁱ Certificated first aid training has been an element of site-based habitat works.

Some training carries professional accreditation as with certification of pesticide application and use of a brush cutter in connection with the INNS project. Other training although not certificated has included the delivery of skills with wider application such as child safeguarding.

Long term benefits are difficult to ascertain and as in all HLF funded programmes it would be

valuable to secure retrospective feedback from individual trainees. However anecdotal evidence to date suggests that many of those involved in projects have greatly valued the opportunity to acquire new skills. For example from the Wandle Flowing Through Time (Oral History) project:

"Enjoyed the training to record interviews and take oral history. The trainers were first class."(V)

ⁱ A short video of an LWT wetland training day in July 2015 is online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVHA09pHrri

One unemployed volunteer gained greatly in self-esteem and confidence:

"I decided to get involved with the Wandle Project because I liked the idea of evoking memories people had about growing up, or working by The Wandle [...] By being a volunteer I learnt how to listen about peoples' experiences through transcribing. [...] I enjoyed all aspects of being a volunteer from hearing peoples' memoirs and listening to pupils put across their aspirations of how to improve The Wandle. All in all I can say this has been exciting and rewarding."(V)

Another volunteer (in full-time employment) said:

"This was my very first experience of doing any voluntary work outside of my community. [...] I appreciated the training I received and the friendly and supportive atmosphere around working with you guys. [...] If there is anything not so positive to say, I would say that I regretted I did not give it more time than I did. [...] It also taught me something about working and looking after volunteers which as a user of volunteers in my work place, I can now appreciate their contributions even more and feel stronger about the need to look after them to give them something back such being supportive and helping them gain new skills."(V)

Also important have been the non-accredited skills including 'leisure interest' and soft skills delivered by projects in other programmes:

"All the volunteers there wanted to be actively involved in the hedge-laying task. Some already had the necessary skills to do the job. Those that hadn't were keen to learn. Commitment carried the day."(V)

"Training opportunities in Morden Hall Park have given the team more confidence and skills to work with the river. The long-term benefit is that we can afford to do more river restoration work."(V)

"Vandalis - the film itself is not a huge benefit for the Wandle or the community but the young people and actors who took part have benefited, whether it is confidence or an addition to the CV, all gained some experience and new learning."(PA)

"My favourite memory is the coppicing as I could show the others how to do it – (that helped my confidence as with my disability people usually have to show me). Meeting the other people and joining in is great."(V, Urban Ranger)



Figure 21 River Rehab Team complete their River Restoration at Hackbridge, October 2016

Case study g. MHP Wetlands – Transforming the park through partnerships

Access



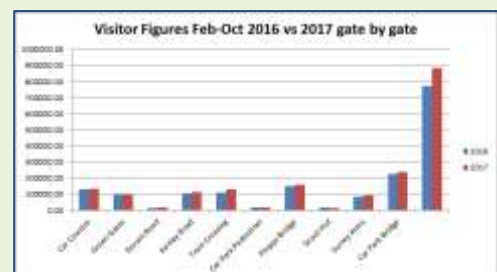
The wetlands at MHP are a highly significant wildlife area but have not always attracted high levels of visitor interest largely due to their inaccessibility. Plans to install a boardwalk, originally scheduled for mid-2014, were delayed due to staff changes and the need to re-route the walk to avoid disturbance of snipe and other sensitive species. In late 2014 HLF requested that the project be adapted to focus more on the improved management

of the Wetlands themselves – including the purchase of a boat to facilitate management of the MHP wetlands and of other sites along the Wandle. While the boardwalk itself was built by contractors, there was significant volunteer and community engagement; the MHP Nature Group was involved in the design; a new 'Wednesday Wetland Group' together with the NT's own and WT's 'River Rehab' volunteers (some newly trained in mini-digger and pesticide use, water safety and first aid) carried out practical and survey work. The high profile project levered in some £60,000 from the Landfill Communities Fund and other sources and boosted LW's own profile, partly compensating for the delay in the start of Chapter House works. Over 100 people attended the November 2016 opening of the boardwalk. Since then it is now regularly used by school groups and MHP's visitor numbers – particularly those using gates closest to the boardwalk - have been significantly increased.



The project impact on MHP has been transformative, both for the property staff (who can now access the Wetlands with heavy machinery), volunteers, and the communities that surround MHP in South West London - bringing them closer to this important priority habitat and ultimately encouraging understanding and respect for nature. This stakeholder engagement was encouraged by the NT who made the Wandle the focus of their events programme for 2017.

The success of the river restoration element of this project has helped to establish a firm relationship between the NT and the WT; the NT are considering the possibility of more restoration work in the park and on their land, as well as implementing the invasive species management plan. In addition, NT staff and volunteers took part in LW training courses, and have installed an eel monitoring box at MHP as part of the Wandle Eel project. Consequently, staff at other NT properties are looking to implement similar projects and learning across the country. All of these examples of wider engagement with LW represent a strengthened relationship amongst the NT and LW partners, the benefits of which can be seen in the Wandle Valley as well as further afield.



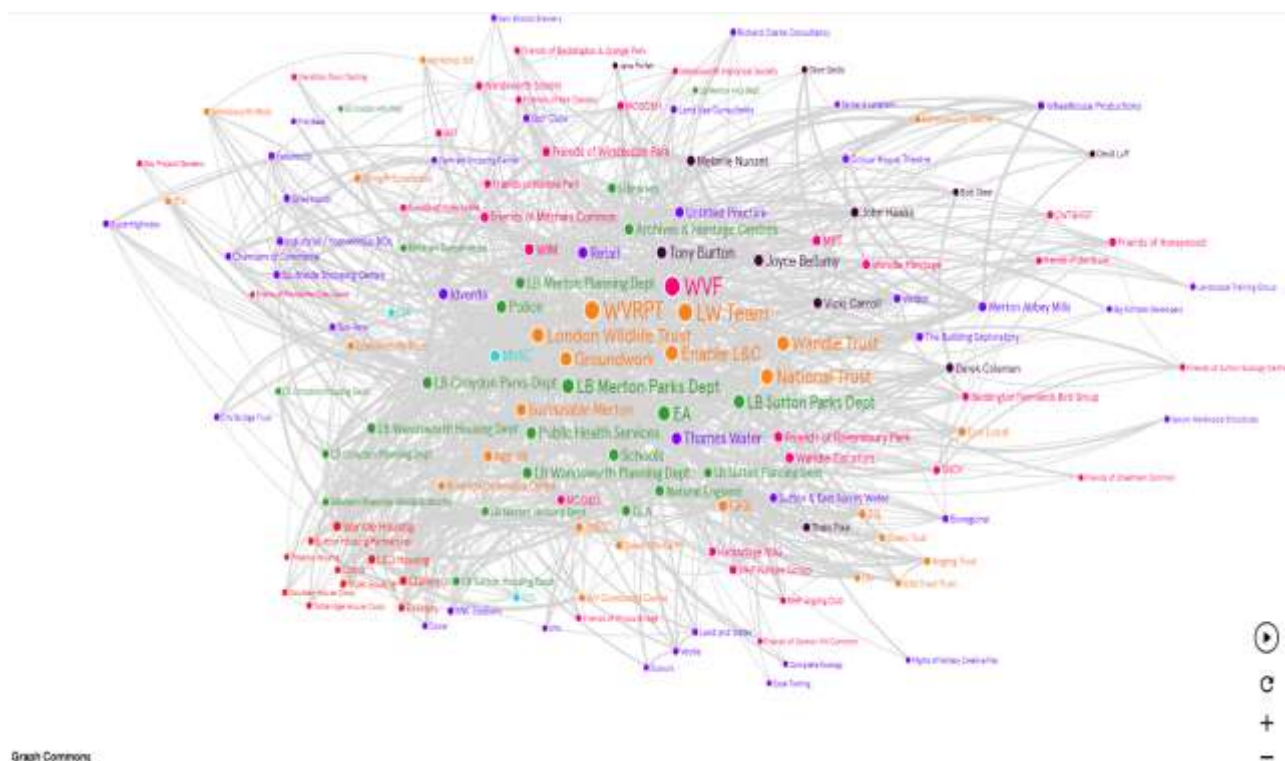
2.6 Wider institutional and economic impacts

Wider institutional and economic impacts of *LW* are difficult to assess.

As the major delivery partner in terms of project spend, the WT has emerged with a strengthened staff team and activity base and an enhanced public profile and support. The WF, not a formal *LW* partner at the start of the scheme, has emerged during its life as a focus for community activity, activism and engagement, including campaigning – unsuccessfully in the case of the demolition of the Hackbridge bridges, but with significant potential to sustain a ‘bottom up’ input into legacy activities.

Significant match funding has been levered in, some of this at least will have been reflected in increased local spend, though impact is impossible to assess. In addition there is awareness amongst the lead partners of the potential for further project funding. At least one member of staff contracted on the basis of *LW* funding has secured a permanent contract.

The most significant potential legacy outcome of *LW* – beyond the impact on the natural and historic heritage, and on individual participants and volunteers – is linked to institutional collaboration and the prospects for a Regional Park (see S 4.3 below). Any longer-term economic benefits of projects such as the Wandle Gateways are dependent on the outcome of this and of HLF’s Resilient Heritage Funding which recognises the potential for realising long-standing initiatives to assert the significance of the Wandle Valley within the Greater London area.



Case study h. Wandle Gateways – Blazing a trail for future growth

Access



The Wandle Gateways project, the third largest in the *LW* programme and one of the least developed in the LCAP, has the potential to be one of the most significant in relation to longer-term ambitions to generate an integrated vision for the area. To this end, the WVRPT secured approximately £900k of additional value to expand the scope of the Gateways and facilitate future aspirations.

In 2012, the WVRPT commissioned GW to develop proposals for a program of interventions, improvements and capital works for enhancement of the Wandle Trail to be included in the *LW* application to HLF. Issues of branding and permissions have meant that all Gateways have been delivered behind schedule but a total of 7 Gateways are on track for completion within the lifetime of the scheme; 2 each at Poulter Park (Sutton), Colliers’

Wood (Merton) and Waddon Ponds (Croydon) and one at Trewint Street (Wandsworth) though only two were delivered solely as part of *LW* and others have been delivered with the aid of other funding streams including Big Green Fund.



The Gateways project has been a complex project to manage by all partners. However it was fortunate to receive the dedication of the Trust’s single (and part-time) member of staff, who is to be congratulated on securing the realisation of those planned to date. The WVRPT commissioned GW to deliver the Waddon Ponds and Trewint Street Gateways and provide project management, design, community engagement and additional fundraising.



The WVRPT and GW working collaboratively have enhanced partnerships and created new stakeholder relationships to ensure project milestones have been met. All Gateways have involved a measure of public consultation and some (as at Trewint Street) have linked up with other *LW* projects, including a film workshop (October 2016) to capture people’s thoughts on the local area as well as volunteer planting and family birdwatching days.

The Gateways have been instrumental for other green infrastructure improvements —not all of which are part of *LW* — which have already brought noticeable improvements and are providing a stimulus to further initiatives aimed at improving amenity and physical access.



3 Administration, delivery and governance

3.1 Governance

The governance structure for *LW* is illustrated in Figure 23 below. The Accountable Body (Lead Partner) is the London Borough of Wandsworth (LBW) working through a small Partnership Board and a wider

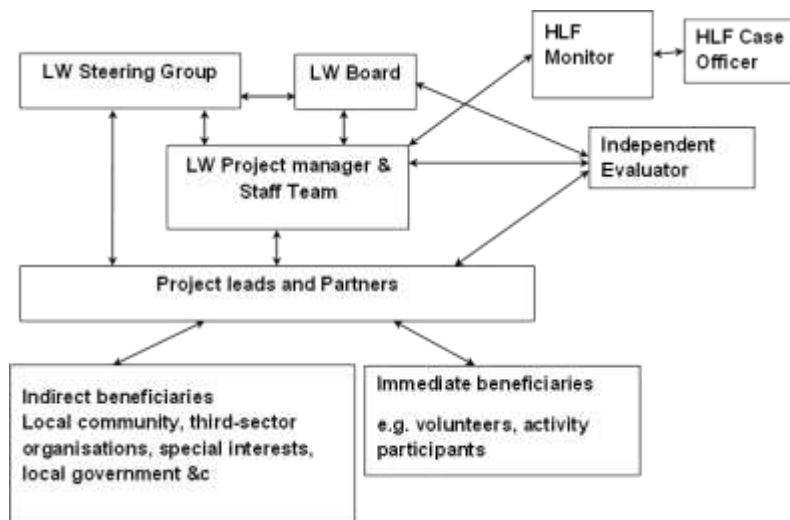


Figure 23 Governance structure for the *LW* LP

Steering Group (SG) comprising representatives of all major project partners. Day-to-day co-ordination is through a small team comprising an LP Manager and two Project Officers.

In October 2015, ELC was formed as a charitable staff-mutual company which then took over the delivery of leisure, parks and cultural services across Wandsworth. ELC's Managing Director - previously LBW's Assistant Director (Leisure Services) - remained Chair of the *LW* Board; ELC's Chief Parks

Officer remained Chair of the *LW* Steering Group, providing line management for the *LW* team. Significant inputs in kind have been provided by other LBW/ ELC officers and staff.

In terms of day-to-day administration and delivery this arrangement has worked well. ELC staff in particular are to be congratulated for their role in facilitating a smooth transition so that the work of the *LW* team and partners has not been significantly affected.

One early concern had to do with the fact that the SG, confined initially to delivery partners, was not seen as representative of the wider community. One respondent expressed concern about the dominance of, and concentration of project delivery in a few organisations:

"I have a concern that as one or two orgs have had such a strong presences within LWLP others are beginning to sit back and leave it to them which I fear may mean the legacy stumbles in the areas not under their auspice."(PL)

Another PL felt that the SG is hampered from providing strategic leadership through focusing principally on problems of individual project delivery and that it could do more to take a long view of the long-term outcomes of *LW*. Only after our mid-term review did the SG and Board both have full access to financial information and receive each other's minutes; this led to a perception that the SG has principally a consultative (rather than a strategic, leadership) function.

Unusually, GW London is both a partner of and a contractor to the *LW* scheme, and has done well to avoid any significant conflict of interest. Fair procurement meant that WT (the largest partner by project value) was unable, as project manager to tender for the Ravensbury Channel works which were then abandoned when the quotes received were over budget.

No community groups were formally represented on the Partnership. The WVF, not a formal member of the SG, was invited in 2017 to send a representative along with ForP. A steering group more

representative of wider community interests and including (for example) and the Wandle Industrial Museum might have facilitated community links and the related legacy aspirations of the *LW* scheme. There is no reason in principle why SG membership need be restricted to delivery partners particularly where final (and especially financial) decisions are taken by a Board chaired (as was the *LW* SG) by a representative of the Accountable Body.

It is to the credit of the delivery team and LBW/ ELC officers that *LW* has not been perceived as an LBW owned (as well as led) scheme. However the ‘partnership-wide’ nature of *LW* might have been symbolically emphasised by locating early SG meetings elsewhere than in Wandsworth Town Hall. To *LW*’s credit later SG meetings were held in other Boroughs.

A related concern expressed during evaluation relates to the distribution of project value, by partner and/or by location. WT has delivered over 25% of project spend, however whilst the greater part of this has been on delivery of the Catchment Plan, community-related projects, including education as well as INNS, have ensured community engagement well beyond WT’s established volunteer base.

38% of *LW* project spend by location is in the LB Merton though the greater part of this (20% of the total) is taken up by MPCH expenditure, with a further 12% accounted for by activities at MHP (Figure 24). Although LBW and ELC have contributed significantly in officer time, the Borough itself has arguably had the least benefit from the scheme as the bulk of activity and expenditure has taken place neighbouring boroughs. In terms of geographically distributed projects the need to control INNS by working downstream from the upper reaches means that much of the work to date has taken place in Sutton, which is not a contributing partner to the *LW* scheme.

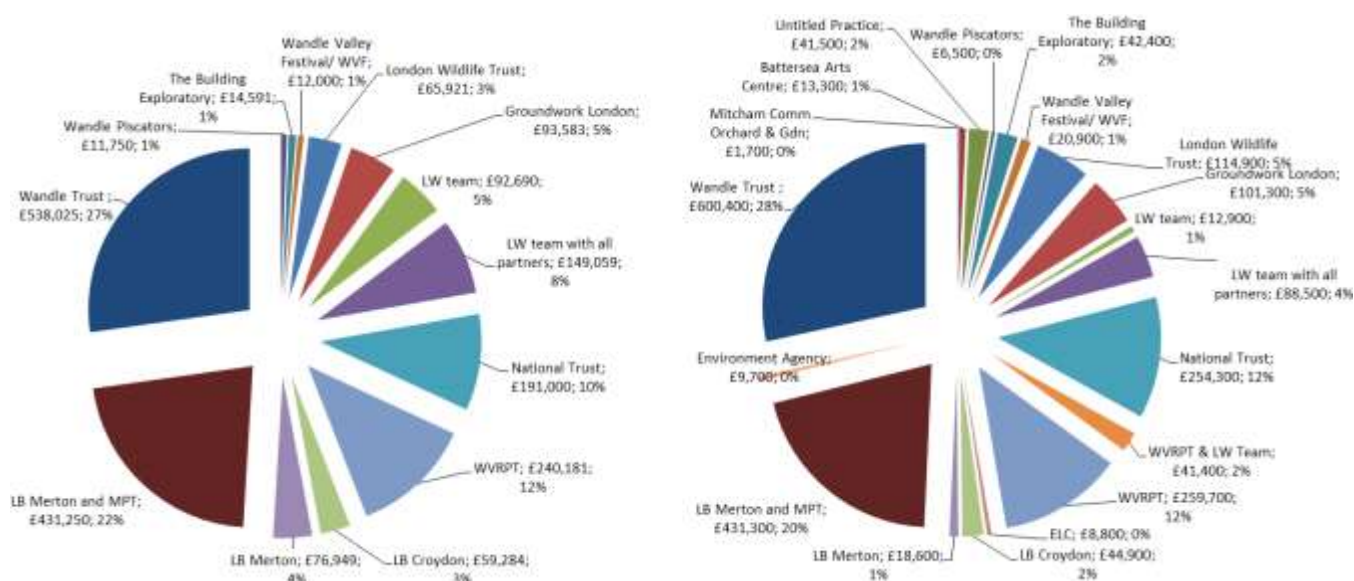


Figure 24 Initial (2013,⁽¹¹⁾ left) and projected final (Jan 2018, right) *LW* project value by delivery partner

Future coordination and governance of landscape activities within the *LW* area would seem to turn on the prospects for a Regional Park. ELC’s present oversight of activities across the whole of the *LW* area will cease with the end of the LP scheme. Within LBW, ELC’s management and supervision of physical works will depend on the outcome of a retendering process. Local authority greenspace management and maintenance in neighbouring boroughs is already outsourced to the company idverde (which took over the contractors Quadron services during the life of *LW*) and co-ordination will be critical.

3.2 Funding

Sources of delivery income for the *LW* scheme are presented in Figure 25. *LW* has faced a number of challenges in relation to financial management. The first has been the progressive tightening of local authority finance (and in particular the loss of staff and/or pressure on officer time) over the lifetime of the scheme consequent upon government cuts to local authority grant, exemplified by the withdrawal of LB Sutton during the development phase. Both Merton and Croydon have undergone restructuring and lost officers who were initially dealing with key projects.

This and other difficulties in communication and procurement have meant that the start of several projects (not least MPCH) were significantly delayed. It is to the credit of ELC employees that its formation during *LW*'s delivery as an outsourced staff mutual limited company delivering LBW's open space and leisure services has not impeded *LW*'s own delivery arrangements or budgeting.

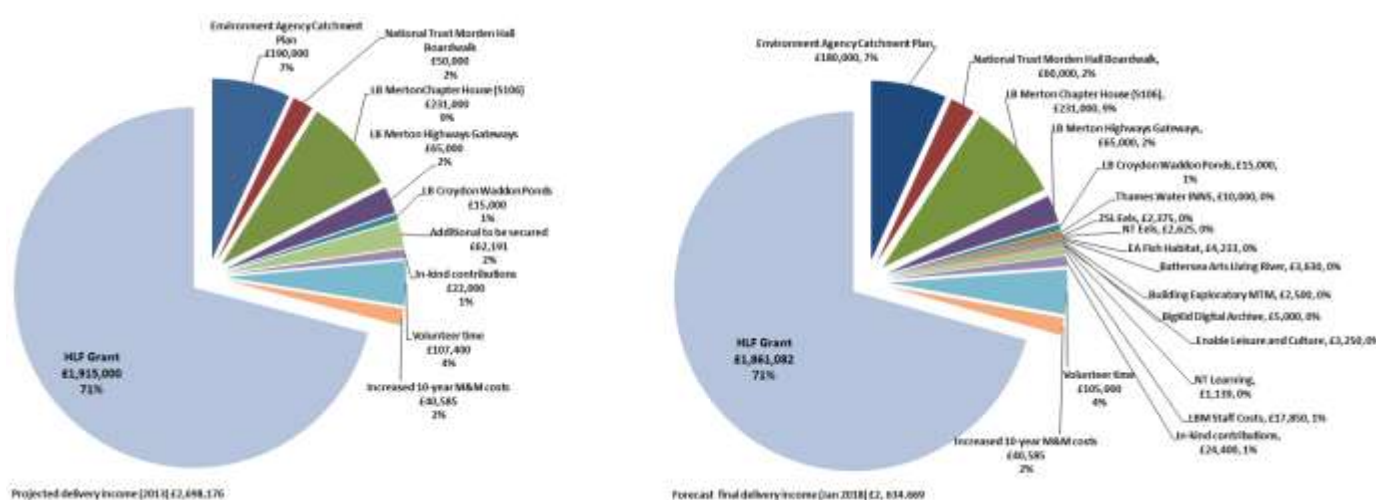


Figure 25 Sources of delivery income forecast in *LW*'s S2 application (2013)⁽¹⁾ and (Jan 2018) forecast 2018

A second challenge has been to secure match funding, also made more difficult (for all LPs) by the tightening of public-sector budgets. This has been exacerbated by a change in HLF policy whereby contributions in kind by public bodies (in particular staff time) can no longer be counted as match funding. The delivery phase commenced with the need for the partnership to secure £62,191 in match funding with confusion amongst partners about the impacts on *LW* cash contribution to their projects. This was resolved with contributions in kind exceeding those in the original budget. The *LW* team and all partners are to be congratulated in meeting these challenges.

Alongside this, staff and partners have managed to secure significant additional contributions for some projects. One notable example is in the case of the production of the film *Vandalis* where Wheelhouse Productions, the contracted production company, managed to find £9.7k additional sponsorship plus significant additional contributions in kind (lighting, accommodation) from a variety of sources. Piscators received an additional £1.9k grant from Thames Water, MHP Wetlands an additional £19k; smaller sums include £3250 match funding from Greenland developers for a Wandle Art project where no match funding was required. And, importantly, WVRPT secured additional funding of over £135k for the Gateways project including £63k from LB Croydon and a similar amount from LBW. Overall the *LW* team estimate that *LW* partners have secured around £1.5m in cash and kind for the scheme and for future work.

3.3 Delivery arrangements, project monitoring and communication

Our assessment of the management and delivery of the programme is that administration and delivery have been competent and efficient. There has been widespread praise for the initiative, energy, and enthusiasm of the LW team. LW partners and project leads have shown commitment and drive and also an openness to working together which has been important to LW's success. LBW/ ELC officers have applied good project oversight, and this has been done in a way which has been open and accommodating.

This perception is broadly supported by the responses to the online survey and interviews.

"Very impressed with the work, commitment and enthusiasm of the delivery team."(PA)

"Friendly and enthusiastic team coordinating the scheme who are passionate about what they do."(PL)

"A lot of effort made to engage with other local organisations working towards the same goals."(PL)

"My interactions with the team have indicated a very highly motivated, enthusiastic and engaging team. All of the projects that I have been involved with have been delivered professionally, with great care and thought."(V)

"The team have been pro-active in keeping partners communicating and also ensuring that reporting is done on time and accurately. They were brilliant in advising on procurement for the project I worked on at MHP and supporting with correct information at all times."(PL)

"Energy and enthusiasm of the staff. They clearly care and believe in the projects."(V)

"They have largely delivered on time - and always on budget. Despite turnover of two staff, excellent replacements were quickly found."(PL)

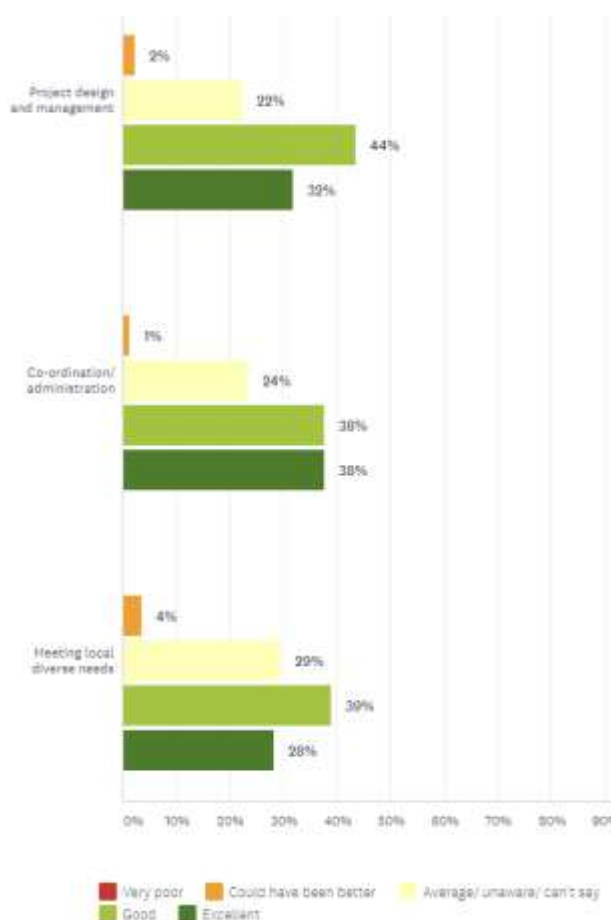


Figure 26 Survey respondents' opinion of LW design and delivery.

Most reservations regarding project delivery focused on detail:

"It was a cold day and there was a bit too much unnecessary talk at the beginning."(V)

"We needed more waders."(V)

Only one respondent offered any significant criticisms of project design and management; almost 80% of respondents felt that design and management was good or excellent (Figure 26).

There is always a difficult balance to be struck between delivery in house or by local community organisations (who may lack key management skills), and 'outsourcing' to third-sector or commercial organisations who may have a proven track record in project delivery but who may also lack local awareness or roots and who carry their own overheads. The former adds to the work of the LP team; the latter may lead to inflexibility, particularly where contracts are associated with other projects whose timescale or detail subsequently changes.

"Not sure that a private company, which obviously need funding by Heritage Lottery are the best way to carry out such projects."(V, MTR)

In the case of LW this has not in general proved a major problem; both Groundwork (as a Partner but also a delivery contractor) and the Building Exploratory have delivered projects which have received praise from the individuals involved. Nevertheless, the question remains of whether direct contracting, for example of Wheelhouse — a local company which itself contributed resources in kind (time and apparatus) beyond the requirements of their contract — might have avoided the costs of an intermediary project manager. This approach seems to have been successful in the case of projects such as Living River, developed during the life of LW.

Internal project monitoring has been largely by regular contact between the LW team and project leads/partners supplemented by quarterly financial claims. The procedure has been developed during the early stages of delivery so that each claim is submitted on a proforma requiring a progress report on outputs against targets and wider outcomes are often mentioned. The process of reviewing outputs against output targets across all projects appears to have worked extremely well and mechanisms for capturing output data (OD) were generally robust.

Gathering meaningful 'people' data is a problem for all landscape partnerships but the LP team and partners have done exceptionally well to encourage delivery partners to conduct their own project evaluation and to submit a report with evidence (as data, case studies and expert or individual testimony) of outcomes with final claims. The LW team have maintained their own archive of these and other project materials (photographs, case studies &c) and have submitted periodic progress reports to the LW Board and Steering Group.

Communications

Communications and public engagement are an important element of LW. The LW team have produced a quarterly newsletter which is circulated electronically both to LW's own contacts list (over a thousand individuals including 742 local Wandle Watchers of whom around 300 open the newsletter) and via partners to a wider audience, reaching a significantly greater number of individuals, including volunteers. The LW team have also maintained a social media presence on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

A separate section in the online survey was included at the request of the LW team relating to communications strategy and effectiveness of the scheme's use of media. Most respondents (55%) had become involved with LW via membership of a partner or participating organisation or had learnt about it by word of mouth or through personal contact (41%); lesser numbers (between 8 – 12%) became involved through other means, for example by seeing a LW events leaflet or newsletter or via the web or social media. Asked to comment on LW's use of different media, respondents commended the team's newsletters and events leaflets, although there was less praise for its website and use of social media (this last perhaps reflecting the age of respondents).

"Possibly some sections of the community have not been reached because there was no advertising in the schools and colleges. Many young people don't go to libraries."(PL)

"The digital library takes a long while to load documents and images."(V)

"The team as a whole work very effectively together and with external organisations. Their communication is well above par."(PL)

"Regular and clear communications over email in coordinating across the delivery of projects [have been particularly good]. The Living Wandle Conference was also very well organised and delivered to a high standard."(PL)

One obstacle to effective communication was the delayed development of the WVRPT website on which (as on its predecessor) the Living Wandle link can be found only as a component 'project'.⁽¹⁴⁾ Together

with the absence of a link from the WVRPT's home page, this probably impeded a greater early awareness of the LW scheme. There has also been a limited use of maps – itself in part a consequence of the limitations of the WVRPT website, on which an interactive map at an early stage might have assisted communication of individual events and their location and at the same time emphasised the 'landscape scale' nature of LW's work. Only in late 2017 did the LW web pages include a welcoming 'meet the team' link presenting names, contact details – and photographs - of the LW team. Again, there is no direct link from the WVRPT front page whose 'About Us' presents a corporate image carrying no individual names or contact details whatsoever - understandable given the fact that WVRPT has only one part-time member of staff, but a barrier to effective communication nevertheless. These are issues for HLF to consider in relation to its requirement for LP schemes to have a separate 'identity' from any existing legacy body as well as its Accountable Body.

"The only benefit I know of is being told by a third party of your existence and given a link to your page."(NP)

"I think that perhaps you could have publicised yourselves better."(PA)

"Your website seems to be excellent and ought to be better known."(PA)

A potential obstacle to communication with individual volunteers and participants (and to the establishment of a wider shared legacy vision for the LW area) is that major partners understandably see their own records of volunteer contact details as confidential (and their volunteers as 'theirs'). In practice this has not proved a problem; all partners have been prompt to forward newsletters and other communications and in this way have acted as a channel of communication between the LW team and a wider constituency. Hopefully this readiness to share information will continue after the end of LW.

A related issue concerns public confusion over the relative roles of the different organisations associated with LW – WVRPT, the WVF, and the WT. The 'overcrowding' of communications activity has if anything, increased public confusion over 'who is who and who does what'; a number of organisations have the word 'Wandle' in their title which raises challenges in creating strong identity for any one individual organization. The issue of branding is considered further in Section 4, below.

"I'm not really aware of the difference between LW and the WTrust."(PA)

Given these obstacles, the LW team are to be congratulated on their attention to communication throughout the life of the LP scheme. Contacts lists and other material will be transferred to the WVRPT as legacy body and by the end of the scheme it is expected that all LW's web pages will be in a legacy 'state' giving access to most of the resources produced by individual projects, including static media (as .pdf or e-book) and embedded video footage, together with contact details for the relevant project partner.

4 Legacy, landscape and lessons learnt

This section considers the legacy of *LW* - the enduring benefits delivered by the scheme following the end of HLF funding - and the lessons learnt which may help other (particularly urban) multi-project partnership schemes operating at a landscape scale, in the future.

The *LW* team and the Partnership as a whole deserve particular praise in relation to their concern with legacy. The team have worked throughout delivery with project leads and partners to identify legacy outcomes and encourage the development of legacy plans for all major projects. Where relevant, these have been summarised in Section 3 above and are not repeated here. Project legacy plans have fed in to *LW*'s own whole-scheme Legacy Plan which identifies not only the lasting benefits that *LW* has achieved but ways in which these can be carried forward within the framework of an overall vision for the area.ⁱ

4.1 Legacy arising from individual projects

All project outcomes may count as 'legacy' to the extent that they endure beyond the end of the LP scheme. Outputs and outcomes were presented inconsistently in the LCAP but this was remedied by the *LW* team at an early stage by preparing individual project summary sheets linked to a spreadsheet-based quarterly reporting system facilitating monitoring and reporting. End-of-project evaluations of outcomes against project aims were required from each project lead as the basis for the final financial claim.

It has been a feature of delivery that partners and project leads have had a sense of ownership over the targets and indicators and have actively engaged in identifying longer-term benefits and the evidence that enabled these benefits to be demonstrated. Thinking actively about legacy has been encouraged by the *LW* team both through personal contact, through the requirement to address the issue in end-of-project reports, and through an active process of legacy planning in conjunction with the *LW* SG.

The end-of-project reports and individual project legacy plans are particularly valuable since, although it has been possible in this report to convey only a fraction of the information they contain, they will remain available to others not just as a record of what was achieved within the lifetime of *LW* but as a guide to planning of similar projects elsewhere.

The biggest single challenge to legacy of physical works arises from government cuts to local authority finances. This is particularly the case on those sites where there is presently little local support or active engagement which could help to ensure that effective management and maintenance is undertaken. Management and maintenance plans in several cases should help to prevent deterioration provided there is the determination to implement them, encouraged by public scrutiny.

"Some of the projects have been great. But it doesn't matter how good individual projects are if it's a firework for a couple of years which doesn't leave something behind it."(NP, MTR)

The best guarantee that the works to MPCH (when completed) will be sustained is the commitment and determination of MPT, hopefully supported by local residents and a growing band of volunteers. The WT will doubtless likewise continue to monitor the outcomes of habitat works and extend them, particularly in relation to INNS control, habitat diversity and the fish and invertebrate fauna of the river, again with an enlarged and strengthened group of trained volunteers.

ⁱ *LW*'s Legacy Planning page can be inspected on <https://wandlevalleypark.co.uk/projects/livingwandlelegacy/>. This includes a list of proposed legacy activities relating to each of *LW*'s ten legacy aims (see page 9) as well as information on physical resources that will remain available following *LW*'s conclusion.

Assessment of the legacy of the physical products – research findings, booklets, video output - of LW projects is difficult; no information is available relating to any sales of Wandle Flowing Through Time or of the number viewings of the video Vandalis. Both are now available (though only the booklet is downloadable) from LW’s legacy website, however this is too recent for any meaningful analytics; Follow-up would be required to assess, for example, the ongoing school use of education packs (or activities of trained staff) delivered by Project Kingfisher.

One legacy issue is to do with intellectual property rights and availability. The film Vandalis is attributed to Groundwork productions (who appear to retain the copyright) and although viewable online at LW’s legacy website the film is not downloadable and availability of the physical copie(s) following the end of LW is uncertain. The LW team is to be commended for making as much material as possible available in digital format and for seeking a permanent home for other physical products of LW projects – such as the Wandle Treasures map.

Also difficult to assess is the lasting outcome — beyond participants’ own assessments of the quality (or their enjoyment of) activities in which they have been involved- of ‘people’ projects. These have been overwhelmingly positive, as has the assessment of relevant third parties – including teachers of pupils involved in ‘Creatures in the Classroom’ and ‘Window on the Wandle’ activities.

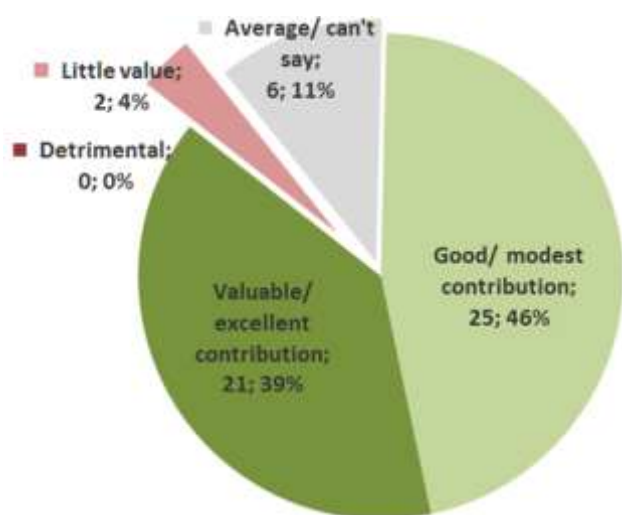


Figure 27 Mid-delivery assessment of project contribution to Wandle heritage and communities

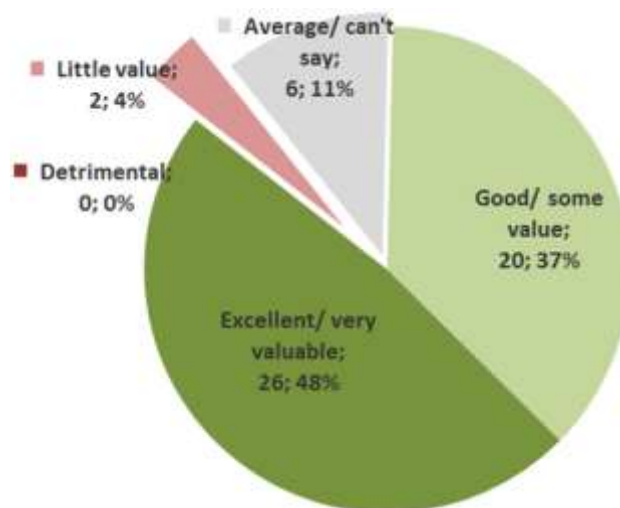


Figure 28 Mid-delivery perception of personal benefits of participation in LW projects

A significant ‘people’ legacy of LW projects to project volunteers and participants is attested by survey responses. At mid-delivery, over 80% of survey respondents felt that the projects in which they had been engaged had made a significant contribution to the heritage and/or communities of the Wandle area (Figure 27) and a similar number reported personal benefits to themselves from participation (Figure 28). This question was not repeated in the final survey; however the fact that over 80% of respondents expect to continue to be involved in ongoing legacy activities in the area (Figure 30 p45) against the 34% who stated that they were already involved before the LW scheme began (Figure 29) is encouraging.

“Meeting new local people has been a benefit. I have enjoyed the research and just wish I had more time to give.”(V)

“It would have been good for this project [the Chapter House] to have achieved earlier and had wider benefits.”(PL)

"[I got involved because] I jog along the bank of the Wandle weekly, so was keen to help make improvements."(V)

"I will definitely spend more time walking the river area and will volunteer to clean up the section of the river close to me."(PA)

4.2 Working at a landscape scale – the enduring benefits of Living Wandle

LW projects exist amongst, and complement numerous other projects and initiatives promoted both by LW partners and by other bodies in the area. So while the outcomes and legacy of individual projects are important, they are part of a wider mosaic of activities. An assessment of the wider achievements and legacy of the LW scheme as a whole must be framed in terms of the degree to which they help to secure the broader vision embodied in the LW LCAP.

The underlying premise of LP work is that working at a landscape scale can deliver benefits above and beyond those that would accrue from funding a series of disparate projects – that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts and that both individual projects and the scheme as a whole makes a lasting impact on the area – that it leaves a legacy.

The wider mosaic of activities of which LW projects are a part includes other heritage – related projects including Lottery funded activities such as Wandle Park and Beddington Park enhancements, other initiatives in in ALGG's 'rolling list'⁽²⁾ as well as ongoing works in other locations to the riparian habitat besides those funded by HLF grant through LW. Legacy here will depend on how far LW projects (such as INNS) can be shown to lead to lasting improvements (involving on-going monitoring and maintenance) in the locations in which they have been carried out, and also to the degree to which they complement or enhance other works, leading (for example) to greater ecosystem connectivity, quality and resilience.

Similarly assessment of the legacy of footpath and other access improvements (including Gateways) will require a demonstration not only of the enduring value of these works in the locations in which they have been carried out, but the degree to which they enhance the footpath network (including linear access along the River), public enjoyment, integrity and wider recognition of the value of the Wandle and the Wandle Valley as a whole. The LW Interpretation Strategy⁽¹⁵⁾ and the LCAP⁽¹⁾ remain relevant documents in this regard.

That mosaic is largely uncoordinated and includes activities or processes tending in the opposite direction; examples include demolition in March 2017 of the Hackbridge railway bridges by Network Rail to save the costs of maintenance. This has severed public access across a large area of greenspace (three times the size of Hyde Park) at the heart of the LW area, much of which is landfill and presently inaccessible, but which has significant wildlife and amenity potential and hopefully in due course will become public open space. These and other events highlight the need for more protection, clear management plans and coordinated governance.

Beyond the enduring benefits of physical works to natural and cultural heritage, prospects for legacy depend ultimately on the enthusiasm and engagement of individuals and the most enduring legacy of LW may be a continued commitment of people and organisations to sustaining and extending what has already been achieved.

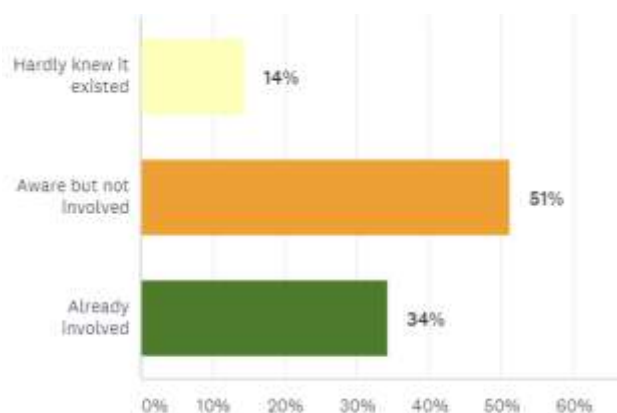


Figure 29 Before the Living Wandle scheme started in 2013, how much did you know about the River Wandle and how involved were you with it?

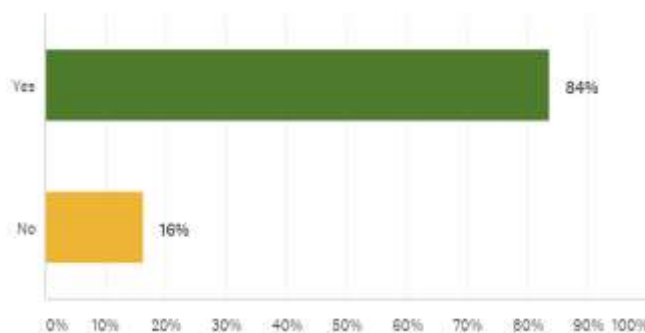


Figure 30 Are you or do you plan to be involved in ongoing or legacy activities relating to LW?

Just over a third of respondents to the online survey were already involved in some way with the Wandle before the start of the LW scheme, however more than 60% were not – of whom 14% ‘hardly knew it existed’.

In this context it is encouraging that some 84% of respondents stated that they were likely to participate in LW legacy activities (Figure 30). However it is perhaps also not unexpected given the composition of those who responded and it would have been good to have had more feedback from other volunteers and participants in LW events and activities.

Overall it seems likely that, working at a landscape scale, LW has contributed significantly to the furtherance of its aim, to secure ***‘A vibrant healthy, sustainable, multi-functional landscape in which people recognise and are inspired by the natural and cultural heritage of the valley and river.’***⁽¹⁾

4.3 Institutional collaboration, community engagement and a Wandle Valley Regional Park

A major test of LW’s legacy will be the degree to which it will be seen in the future as having contributed to the realisation of what is a centrepiece of ALGG’s Area Strategy – *‘to develop a framework for the creation of a new Regional Park – as a vehicle to improve the management, funding and identity of open space within the Wandle Valley.’*⁽²⁾

Proposals for a Regional Park significantly predate LW. A Regional Park Board was established in 2005, in the same year as the WVF and the WT. Since then the WVRPT, the WT and the WVF have all emerged as significant players in the area, each with distinct and complementary roles. Both the WT and the WVF sit on the WVRPT Board as Trustees and Directors and have reaffirmed the WVRPT as the institutional vehicle for delivering ambitions for coordinated landscape-wide governance and management. The vision of WVRPT, established in 2012 as a limited company (and a Registered Charity since mid-2013) is to become a strategic sub regional partnership, focused on the Wandle and its catchment and eventually to become its managing body.

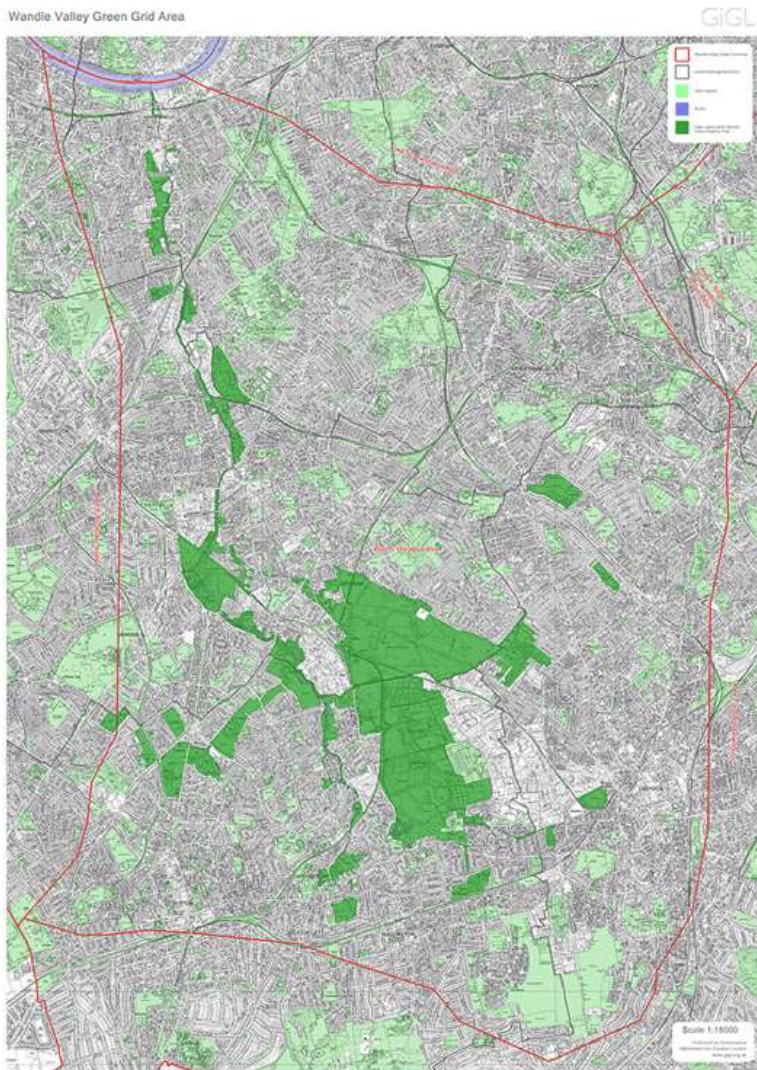


Figure 31 The Living Wandle LP area showing boundary of the proposed Wandle Valley Regional Park

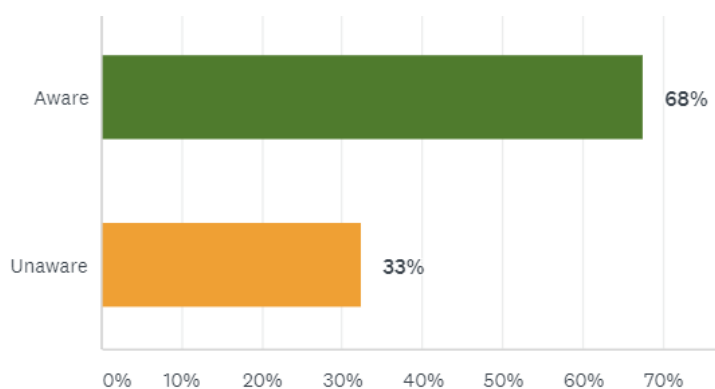


Figure 32 Are you aware of proposals to create a Wandle Valley Regional Park?

Whilst two-thirds of survey respondents were aware of proposals to create a Regional Park, the remainder – including LW volunteers and project participants – were not.

However public confusion over the relative roles of the different organisations associated with LW – the WVRPT, the WVF and the WT – remains. Given that the WVRPT was seen from an early stage as LW's legacy body (a position affirmed by the WVF and the WT) some of this at least could have been avoided (and the profile of the WVRPT enhanced) without prejudicing the role of LBW as Accountable Body, by adopting the name 'Wandle Valley Landscape Partnership' for the LP scheme.

This would also have enabled both entities – the WVRPT and the LP – to adopt the same logo – an elaborate but distinctive and hugely effective design, produced *pro bono* for WVRPT by Barker Langham during the life of the scheme.

HLF's own insistence on a distinct branding for 'its' funded LPs is understandable but in this case has not helped LW's legacy.

A related problem has been the delays to (and reduction in) the LW Gateways project – itself underfunded (the original bid for £360k was reduced by HLF to £270k) and administered by an understaffed WVRPT. More – and earlier – gateways might have done a great deal to secure greater public recognition, as well as securing a *de-facto* assertion of the integrity and value of the area 'on the ground'. The gateways now in place will usefully act as the focus for further efforts to emphasise the integrity of the Wandle Valley as a whole, and to improve even further the physical and intellectual access to its heritage.

Nevertheless, while comparable base line data is available in regard to awareness of (or attitudes to) the establishment of a Regional Park in the area, anecdotal evidence suggests that support for the proposal – and for WVRPT – may have increased at least amongst community groups.

In September 2017, as *LW* was drawing to a close, WVRPT secured a grant of nearly £95,000 from HLF's Resilient Heritage Fund, together with match funding of £71,000 from Clarion Housing, Wandle Housing, the GLA, the Architecture Heritage Fund, Awards for All and idverde. The money, which includes a full-time project officer (12 month contract) may help to put WVRPT 'on the map' as a body which works across local authority and institutional boundaries to take an overarching view of the land and its 'populations of all species' to deliver services and also to consider how its public open spaces can deliver as green infrastructure for the Wandle Valley and London as a whole.

This does not guarantee the Regional Park's (or the WVRPT's) future; there are many hurdles still to cross. However the wide cross-sectoral support for the establishment of a Regional Park – to which *LW* has made a significant contribution – is a hopeful sign in this regard.



Figure 33 *LW*'s final celebratory conference in session – November 2017

4.4 Lessons Learnt

Key learning points, arising from what has worked well (and what has not worked so well), offered to other LPs, particularly those in urban areas, include:

- Think seriously about evaluation in the development phase (and include an outline of what you propose in your funding proposals). Produce a monitoring and evaluation framework, 'owned' by the partnership as a whole, early in delivery, keep this under review and revise it as required. Embed evaluation – especially of 'intangibles' - in project delivery. Include a thorough interim evaluation/ mid-term review of the scheme as a whole. Consider carefully how you might best use external/ independent consultants.
- Launch your biggest projects, especially those involving physical works, at the start and get them underway quickly. This will help to demonstrate achievement and provide momentum to smaller projects and to the scheme as a whole. Reduce risk by sorting permissions and practicalities for physical projects in the development phase; don't leave this until you start delivery.
- Use third party contracted delivery, especially of 'people' projects, with care. This may relieve your team of administration, but does add another layer of overheads, and can prove inflexible, especially when linked to capital works which may be delayed. Provided there is adequate supervisory capacity in the team, local delivery can help secure community 'buy-in' even if it carries more risk.
- Incorporate 'grass roots' projects or a community initiatives (small grant) fund in your application to HLF. Promote it widely from the start of delivery, administered by a committee (perhaps chaired by an independent person) working alongside your steering group. This will help root your scheme in the community and landscape, providing a 'bottom up' element to balance 'top down' major physical works or those led by established institutional partners.
- Retain financial flexibility for activities like volunteer training by having a single budget 'pot' rather than separate training allocations for individual projects.
- 'Branding' is important. HLF's insistence on a distinctive profile for its funded schemes is understandable but where a legacy body (which does not necessarily need to be the Accountable Body for the scheme) is already in place there may be strong reasons for adopting a recognisable title to avoid public confusion and secure commitment to the future.
- Don't skimp on communications. A good website is essential from day 1. An interactive map will help people relate to the landscape as a whole. Use a variety of social media. Ensure contact details of all project participants and volunteers are retained and circulate regular newsletters, centrally and via your partners. This will help your LP scheme to establish an identity against the 'noise' of other activities in the area and to secure 'buy-in' to the wider aims of your LP beyond individual projects.
- Acknowledge and praise completed projects and the effort of individuals involved.
- Work closely with your HLF Monitor and Case Officer to adapt your scheme to changing circumstances and respond to new opportunities as they arise. Use underspend or contingency monies creatively. Have some projects ready 'on the shelf'. Even if they cannot be launched within the life of the scheme they will help demonstrate continuing need and possible additional funding opportunities.

- Alongside tight financial procedures conforming to the practices of your Accountable Body, be flexible about governance arrangements, for example by co-opting Steering Group representation beyond your initial delivery partners to help cement stronger institutional or community links.
- Partner quarterly reports (as with M&E in general) are about ‘improving’, not just ‘proving’ and are for the project (and partnership as a whole) not (just) the delivery team, the HLF monitor or the IE. The same applies to end-of-project evaluations – these are not merely to enable your team to ‘tick the box’; the process of producing them should help to enable partner organisations to reflect on what has gone well (and less well) and to feed in to their own legacy planning.
- Make sure that your Partnership retains the copyright on all the media and other products arising from funded projects so that they may be made available online or transferred to a successor/ legacy body with public access retained.
- Begin to secure clarity (and build consensus) around shared legacy aspirations for the *LW* scheme at an early stage; make this an ongoing focus of work from mid-delivery onwards.



Figure 34 Planting day at Deen City Farm – part of the *LW* RainGardens Project

5 Conclusions

Living Wandle is HLF's first urban Landscape Partnership. Its distinctive features include a largely built-up landscape with high population density, diverse communities including areas of social deprivation, but with many public open spaces,⁽¹⁶⁾ a rich cultural heritage⁽¹⁷⁾ and a great deal of ongoing activity (including other Lottery funded projects) within which the *LW* scheme and its projects have formed part of a wider shifting mosaic. In addition to the activities of the four London Boroughs, the work of the major *LW* partners – the WT, the WVRPT, the NT, as well as of the WVF (bodies not always recognised as distinct by the public) – form parallel but institutionally separate streams.

LW's programme of what is an inevitably somewhat arbitrary selection of projects has addressed key elements of the area's natural and cultural heritage. Individual projects have all embodied objectives appropriate to the needs and potential of the landscape, its residents and visitors, and the local economy. Their outputs and outcomes are well balanced across HLF's four thematic programme priorities (conservation of the built and natural heritage; community participation and engagement; access and learning; and training and skills) and they have had a significant impact – they have 'made a difference' to heritage and for people in its area. Allowing for delays in commissioning or execution, and subject to completion of ongoing projects, they have collectively delivered outputs broadly in line – and in a number of cases in excess of – those specified in the LCAP.

The largest single *LW* project, MPCH – the only one focused directly on physical works to the 'built' and historic fabric of the area – is of importance in its own right, and once the works are completed should yield significant benefits in terms of access, learning and community engagement. Other capital projects, focused on the natural environment (Catchment Plan Delivery, MHP Wetlands and Waddon Ponds) or on access (Wandle Gateways) are significant primarily as part of a wider jigsaw of parallel initiatives in the context of the *LW* area as a whole.

Most of these capital works have themselves included an element of community engagement. Other projects have directly addressed the HLF priorities of community participation, access/learning and training and skills. These, including several whose delivery has been 'outsourced' to agencies based outside the *LW* area, appear to have secured a good degree of community participation and 'buy-in' and have produced significant benefits to those involved. Most changes to project contents, agreed by the HLF Monitor, have matched or have produced a significant advance of those prescribed in the LCAP. The educational work with local schools has been particularly successful and hopefully will lead to continuing efforts to use the Wandle as an educational as well as recreational resource.

While capital works to the historic and 'built' heritage have been limited to MPCH, other projects engaging participants and volunteers in documenting or interpreting the historic and cultural history of the area – from 'Mapping the Mills' to gathering oral testimony – should contribute to a wider awareness of the human past of the Wandle.

Project delivery – of capital works as well as 'people' activities – has been well distributed across the *LW* area, including Sutton. The London Borough of Wandsworth as lead body has provided good financial management and (through ELC) has contributed significant officer time and other resources to the scheme and the somewhat atypical governance arrangements (e.g. with Chair of both the *LW* SG and Board and line manager for the LP team being officers of the lead body) belie the fact that the scheme's spend – and project delivery – is proportionally greater in other Boroughs.

Despite the prominence in the scheme of a limited number of established institutions none have seen HLF funding primarily as a means of funding their own priorities, and all have contributed to a partnership working to a common vision. The engagement of the WT in project delivery should help to ensure that the biodiversity benefits of the scheme are maintained.

LW was not conceived as a 'bottom up' scheme but the engagement of the WVF has helped significantly to remedy this aspect through the micro-grant programme associated with the annual Wandle Fortnight celebrations which hopefully will continue with local sponsorship and co-ordinated in partnership with the WVRPT. The Forum's Charter, produced during LW's delivery, has the creation of a Wandle Valley Regional Park and its integration with a family of London Regional Parks as two of its ten aims and community engagement has been a key element of the strategy of the Regional Park since the formation of the WVRP Board in 2005.

A wider awareness of the significance of the Wandle, the river and its greenspace, on the part of residents, communities and their representatives and a greater synergism between community activism and institutional collaboration may be one of the most significant outcomes of the LW Partnership. In this connection the degree to which the aims of the WVRPT as LW's effective legacy body are achieved will be the single most significant indicator of the degree to which LW's ambitions have been realised. The award to the WVRPT of HLF resilience funding will hopefully contribute to this.

In the meantime Living Wandle can be counted a significant success, its achievements matching the best of other landscape partnerships elsewhere. Congratulations are due to the small but effective LP delivery team who have worked with energy, drive and dedication to provide a robust and effective administrative structure; to LW's partners and project leads who have contributed their expertise and commitment to a diverse programme of projects and, above all, to LW's volunteers who – at the end of the day – have 'made it happen'.

"Thank you for getting me involved with a new and exciting scheme in urban London! Wish some of the work can continue."(V)

"Thanks for the chance to provide feedback. I've not had time to be as involved as much as I'd like, but when I have it's been excellent. I hope that the project is built on in the future and that it becomes an exemplar for urban ecosystem restoration."(NP)

"Thank you for the opportunity to be involved, we have really benefited from this project."(PA)


"Congratulations to everyone involved with this project. It has been interesting, worthwhile and well organised."(PL)

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Appendix 1. Wandle Timeline and Key Stages

The development over time and the **key stages of LW**.

When	What
Pre Stage 1	
1861	Frederick Braithwaite paper to the Institution of Civil Engineers 'On the Rise and Fall of the River Wandle: its Springs, Tributaries and Pollution' - an 'unimportant river in the neighbourhood of London' ⁽⁶⁾
1888-90	Croydon Corporation purchase Frog Mead and Stubbs Mead; opened to the public as Wandle Park More public green spaces are created subsequently in other Boroughs
1897	A series of letters and reports in <u>The Times</u> relating to pollution and sedimentation of spawning grounds and the establishment of a Wandle Fishery Protection Association
1911	Octavia Hill's letter 'River-Bank Walks for Londoners' in <u>The Times</u> ⁽⁷⁾ pleads for help 'to secure a riverside walk along part of the banks of the river Wandle' and launches the River Wandle Open Spaces Committee
1924	Hobson's <u>Book of the Wandle</u> ⁽¹⁸⁾ published
1970-2003	The Wandle Group established representing members of local civic amenity and wildlife groups primarily to assess impacts on the river potentially arising from planning applications and to provide coordinated responses.
1973, 1995	Major pollution spills from Beddington Sewage Treatment Works (BSTW)
1981	London Wildlife Trust founded, establishing nature reserves at Wilderness Island (1987) and Spencer Road Wetlands (1989)
1985	River Wandle surveyed by London Wildlife Trust as part of London Wildlife Habitat Survey
1990	Wandle Trail Group established
1993	Wandle Strategy published by Wandle Heritage Ltd.
1995	The Wandle, Beverley Brook, Hogsmill Catchment Management Plan published (NRA)
1996	Wandle Strategy and Action Plan launched with funding from the Single Regeneration Budget River Wandle & Catchment; River Corridor Survey published Croydon Natural History & Scientific Society publishes Flora of the Wandle
1997	London Borough Sutton and the Wandle Group publishes <u>The Wandle Guide</u>

1999	Wandle Valley Country Park initiative launched by Groundwork London (GW) to attract Millennium funding (unsuccessful)
2000	Jet Set Club – forerunner of the Wandle Trust – formed to improve river quality
2004	Wandle Piscators formed Annual Wandle Festival launched
2005	London Plan (re)designates the Wandle Valley as a regeneration corridor Draft Sub-Regional Development Framework – South London Partnership (Wandle Boroughs) launches Wandle Valley Green Ribbon Initiative ⁽¹⁹⁾ Wandle Trust (WT) established – in 2011 becomes the South-East Rivers Trust Wandle Valley Forum (WVF) established as a stakeholder forum
2006	London Strategic Parks Report ⁽²⁰⁾ identifies the Wandle Valley as a ‘South London Regional Park Opportunity’
2007	1,600 litres of sodium hypochlorite accidentally released into the Wandle from BSTW. Thames Water pledge to support the restoration of the river by funding a partnership programme worth a record £500,000 over the course of 5 years Wandle Landscape & Biodiversity Group (a working group of the Wandle Forum) start work on a Wandle Action Plan to guide river restoration on the Wandle
2007-2008	EU funded project ‘SAUL’, led by GW together with the GLA, initiate a Steering Group of regional and sub-regional partners with a commitment to creating a Regional Park Living Wandle Landscape Partnership (LW) initiative was conceived with lead partner Wandsworth Council Wandle Valley Regional Park is defined in Local Plans (Merton, Sutton, Croydon and Wandsworth)
2008	Wandle Valley Regional Park (WVRP) Vision document ⁽³⁾ is produced (The RP and its boundary is agreed, the shadow board supporting the RP’s further development is comprised of all the future partners of the LW Partnership)
2009	Bella Davies appointed as Development Officer (later, Director) of the WT
2010	(Dec) Stage 1 (development) application for Living Wandle submitted to Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) The Four Boroughs co fund the governance work required to set up the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust (WVRPT) The first CEO for the WVRPT Peter Wilkinson is appointed

STAGE 1 – DEVELOPMENT PHASE OF LIVING WANDLE LPS (LW)

2011 (Feb) **LW Stage 1 (development) grant £78k awarded to Wandsworth Council by HLF for LW**
All London Green Grid (ALGG) launched
WVRP defined in the London Plan as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)
River Wandle Companion (Bob Steel)⁽¹⁷⁾ published

2012 (Jan) **Living Wandle Steering Group commences**
(Dec) **Final version of the LW Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP) produced**
WVRPT becomes a limited company
Wandle Landscape & Biodiversity Group, with input from Environment Agency (EA) and WT produce the Invasive Non-Native Species Action Plan for the valley
Wandle Park in Croydon re-opens after the river was de-culverted and the park enhanced through a HLF funded scheme in partnership with London Mayor's Help a London Park fund and Barrett's Homes.

2013 GW is commissioned by Wandle Valley Park Trust to support an application to HLF for works to improve key Gateway sites into the park across four boroughs as part of LW
WVRPT registered as a charity
(Feb) **Stage 2 delivery application together with LCAP for LW submitted to HLF**
(Jun) **HLF awards delivery grant of £1,915k for LW contributing to total project cost of £2,698,904. Approved purposes of the grant to be completed by November 2018**
(Sep) **LW delivery begins with a launch event organised by the Wandle Valley Festival**
(Oct) The ALGG is revised and recognises the Wandle Valley as SPG (ALGG Framework 8)⁽²⁾

STAGE 2 – DELIVERY PHASE OF LIVING WANDLE

2014 (Jan) **LW core team in post: Rebecca Watts (LP Manager), Louise Crothall (Project Officer) & Tina Corr (Administrator)**
(Jan) Sue Morgan appointed as CEO (part-time, 2 days per week) of the WVRPT
(Jan) LWT Estates Officer Andy Willmore appointed to deliver Social Landlords project (later replaced by Jane Clarke)
The WT start operating publically as the South East Rivers Trust (SERT)
(May) The Building Exploratory appointed to deliver Industrial Heritage Recording Wandle Treasures project
(Jun) **Living Wandle Board commences meetings**
(Jun) River Wandle Catchment Plan⁽²¹⁾ published
(Jun) Volunteer Support Officer Polly Bryant is appointed by WT, later becoming Project Manager for all WT/LW projects
(Jul) **Living Wandle Landscape Partnership is legally constituted**

(Jul) Wandle Festival (Living Wandle Launch Event) charity is dissolved, withdrawing from the partnership

(Sep) LW hosts annual 'River Celebration' at Merton Abbey Mills (Vandalis film premiered)

(Dec) **CEPAR independent evaluation** commissioned (R Clarke, M Anteric) in three stages; Stage 1 (to Sep 2015) – production of an evaluation framework - begins

2015 (Jan) GW appointed to deliver Industrial Heritage Recording Chapter House Documentary project

(Mar) Big Green Fund partnership project at Poulter Park completed by WVRPT includes 2 LW Gateways

(Apr) INNS officer Alan Martin appointed to deliver INNS project for the WT

(May) Education Officer David Gill appointed to deliver Project Kingfisher education programme for the WT

(Jun) **Wandle Valley photo competition launched (joint initiative between LW, WVRPT, WVF)**

(Sep) River Celebration ('Wandle September') promoted by LW team includes 82 events

Wandle Valley Forum Charter is produced at a 'Wandle Futures' workshop

(Oct) **Enable Leisure and Culture (ELC) formed as a not-for-profit company to deliver leisure, sports, parks and cultural services for LB Wandsworth assume management responsibility for the LW scheme, subcontracted by LB Wandsworth**

National Trust London and South East Region Strategy includes the Wandle Valley

WVF Wandle Futures' workshop produces a Wandle Valley Charter

(Dec) **LW web pages launched on the WVRPT website**

2016 (May) **Cepar Stage 2 LW Mid-Delivery Evaluation Report submitted**

(Jul) **8 new projects approved and added to LW programme using available underspend**

(Jul) Ravensbury Park channel enhancement project is aborted (quotes excessive) later replaced by a Wandle-wide eel and fish easement project.

(Jul) Contractor appointed to deliver Discover the Source project for the WT

Get Active Wandle partnership project commences by WVRPT

(Sep) LW team expand River Celebration into 'Wandle Fortnight'. Includes a programme of 53 community events supported by a WVF-administered micro-grant scheme

(Oct) **LW Evaluation and Legacy Workshop attended by all LW partners**

(Oct) The Building Exploratory appointed to deliver Industrial Heritage Recording Mapping the Mills project

(Oct) LWT appoints Wandle Rain Gardens Project officer Jo Ecclestone, later activities being delivered by Rachel Dowse (Community SUDS Project Officer) to deliver the Wandle Rain Gardens project

(Oct) LW team members Louise and Tina resign, Louise joins Natural England as Conservation

Officer

(Nov) **WVRPT Strategy 2016-2012⁽²²⁾ published, helping Living Wandle legacy planning**

(Dec) **Replacement LW Project Officer Sarah Perry starts in post (Communications)**

- 2017**
- (Jan) WT commence the Wandle Eel Project with support from the EA
 - (Feb) **Replacement LW Project Officer Kelvin Shewry starts in post (Finance)**
 - (May) Untitled Practice & Fiona Fyfe Associates appointed to deliver Wandle Vistas project
 - (Jun) Battersea Arts Centre appointed to deliver Living River project
 - (Jun) Online INNS Management Toolkit for the Wandle launched by WT
 - (Jul) SoundFjord appointed (by ELC) to deliver The River Speaks art project
 - (Jun) Marcus Beale Architects take on the management of the Merton Priory Chapter House (MPCH) Project *pro bono* on behalf of Merton Borough Council
 - (Aug) HA Marks contractor appointed to construct the MPCH centre
 - (Sep) Wandle Fortnight 'River Celebration' led by the WV Forum, includes 70 events and activities by local community groups supported by a £3k micro-grants scheme
 - (Sep) **LW final celebrations begin with a Thankyou event for volunteers and project officers**
 - (Sep) **WVRPT awarded HLF Resilient Heritage Funding of £94k for a 12 month project to build capacity for delivering the vision of the Regional Park with support from LW partners**
 - (Oct) **LW final celebration and conference and premier of the LW film [Living Wandle](#)**
- Contracts of the LW team extended until May 2018

- 2018**
- (Mar) **Cepar / LW Final Evaluation & Completion Report submitted**
 - (Mar) **Final LW Board Meeting**
 - (May) **All LW projects complete**
 - (May) **LW team contracts end**

Appendix 2. List of *LW* projects grouped by LCAP thematic area with lead organisation and cost

* = significant modification of project from S2 approval by HLF

** = project added during delivery

<i>Project title</i>	<i>Brief description</i>	<i>Lead body</i>	<i>£kaⁱ</i>	<i>£kb</i>	<i>Status</i>
	<i>A. Natural and built heritage conservation</i>				
A1 - Catchment Plan Delivery / River Rehab	Physical river re-naturalisations and restoration at Morden Hall Park, Hackbridge, Butterhill and Ravensbury back channel including. Includes significant volunteer input and training – chainsaw, surveying and modelling with an EM River flume. ⁽²³⁾	Wandle Trust	306.6	299.4	Complete Continues via Thames Water Funding
A2 - Waddon Ponds	Delivering a more 'natural' look in place of the 'gardenesque' design and improving biodiversity through marginal planting of coir rolls, with lectern interpretation boards and other signage.	LB Croydon	59.3	44.9	Complete
*A3 - Ravensbury Channel	Biodiversity enhancements to the river and wildlife of Ravensbury Park. This project was abandoned after estimates for the work proved to be excessive, after which the unspent sum was allocated to a new project, Wandle Eels & Migratory Fish (below).	LB Merton	76.9	12.8	Abandoned
**A3 - Wandle Eels & Migratory Fish	Installation of eel passes on weirs and channel obstructions to secure a more appealing gateway for eels and other migratory fish. Including support from the EA and volunteer involvement in eel monitoring and pass installation.	Wandle Trust	50.4	70.4	Due for completion March 2018 Continues via ZSL/NT eel pass monitoring.

ⁱ £ka = approved costs in S2 budget; £kb = estimated final project cost

<i>Project title</i>	<i>Brief description</i>	<i>Lead body</i>	<i>£kaⁱ</i>	<i>£kb</i>	<i>Status</i>
A4 - Invasive Species Action Plan (INNS)	Controlling invasive non-native species (INNS) — mainly Floating pennywort, Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed, with a trained volunteer ‘Hit Squad’ as part of an Action Plan for the river. ⁽²⁴⁾	Wandle Trust	70.9	78.7	Complete Continues via Thames Water Funding.
**A4 - NT Boat and equipment / River & wetlands toolkit	Small dinghy and associated equipment including oars and lifejackets purchased to assist NT management of the wetland area in Morden Hall Park and INNS at Watermeads, available also to other LW partners.	National Trust	2.3	2.6	Complete Ongoing via INNS.
**A21 - Fish Habitat Improvement Project	Enhanced channel habitat variability including adding flow deflectors and gravels together with vegetated marginal refuge areas to improve fish spawning grounds in a previously canalised section of the Wandle near Deen City Farm, Merton.	Environment Agency & Wild Trout Trust	10	9.7	Complete
**A22 - Wandle Vistas	Staff and volunteer research of viewpoints and vistas of the Wandle Valley to produce a technical report informing local and neighbourhood planning, plus a printed/web-based community resource for information and way-finding.	Untitled Practice		41.5	Due for completion March 18
	<i>B. Community engagement and participation</i>				
B5 - Wandle Flowing Through Time	An oral history of the Wandle and its people transcribed into a narrative book as well as oral histories captured on the Wandle Digital Library. ⁽²⁵⁾	Groundwork London	47.5	39.2	Complete
B6 - Social Landlords / Estate Communities	Activities with Registered Social Landlords (RSL) aimed at connecting people in social and sheltered housing with the Wandle and its wildlife.	London Wildlife Trust	65.9	61.2	Complete
B7 - Discover the Source of the Wandle	Exploration of a variety of resources to research the sources of the Wandle resulting in a programme of guided and self-guided walks and an exhibition.	Wandle Trust	27	27	Complete

<i>Project title</i>	<i>Brief description</i>	<i>Lead body</i>	<i>£kaⁱ</i>	<i>£kb</i>	<i>Status</i>
B8 - Reflecting the Wandle / Vandalis	A dramatised film (available on the Wandle Digital Library) ⁽²⁶⁾ involving volunteers as actors and producers about the Wandle and its people from prehistory to the present.	Groundwork London	33.5	44.3	Complete
*B9 - River Celebrations	Community events relating to the river and its catchment, from the Living Wandle Launch Event 2013, through a succession of annual Wandle Festivals/Fortnights, volunteer thank you events and the final LW celebration conference. Also included a programme of micro-grants (in 2016 and 2017) to fund community events as part of Wandle Fortnight.	Wandle Valley Festival, then LW Team	14	26.9	Complete Continues via Wandle Valley Forum Business Planning.
*B10 - Wandle Young Piscators	Youth angling, promoting good fishing and conservation practices. This project was curtailed on the sudden death of the Piscators' Chair in September 2016; however volunteer coaches have been trained and the first ever fishing guide to the Wandle has been published.	Wandle Piscators	11.7	6.5	Complete Continues via ongoing Piscators club activities.
**B24 - Living River Performance Art	An original, outdoor promenade performance produced by local teenagers, including underrepresented BAMER backgrounds, about the heritage of the Wandle. A film was produced demonstrating the process of the project.	Battersea Arts Centre		13.3	Complete
	<i>C. Access and learning</i>				
*C11 - Wandle Gateways	Access improvements and signage to key entrances to Wandle Valley greenspaces, including Poulter Park and Watermeads, Waddon Ponds, Trewint Street and Colliers' Wood. Community and volunteer involvement has included planting workshops, community wildlife event and production of a short film. ⁽²⁷⁾	Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust	240.3	255.4	Due for completion March 2018 Continues via WVRPT delivery planning / Resilient Heritage Funds.

<i>Project title</i>	<i>Brief description</i>	<i>Lead body</i>	<i>£kaⁱ</i>	<i>£kb</i>	<i>Status</i>
*C12 - Merton Priory Chapter House	First phase of development of the MPCH site into a modern educational and events centre, including the stabilisation and preservation of the remains of the Chapter House and installation of services and an attractive site entrance.	LB Merton and Merton Priory Trust	431.3	431.3	Due for completion May 2018 Continues via planned, but unfunded, Phase 2.
*C13 - Morden Hall Park Wetlands	Enhancements to MHP wetlands and river for wildlife and visitors including a boardwalk and river restoration, with significant volunteer input and training.	National Trust	191	229.8	Complete
** C13 - Learning in the Wetlands	Public and school group events at Morden Hall Park Wetlands including nature walks, biodiversity monitoring, photography and art activities, plus a suite of equipment to improve and increase the range of activities on offer.	National Trust		21.7	Complete Continues via NT events and activities programs.
C14 - River Education / Project Kingfisher	Educating children in local schools through classroom based 'Creatures in the Classroom' & outdoor visits 'Window on the Wandle'.	Wandle Trust	89.6	91.4	Complete Continues via Gregg's Community Funding.
C15 - Industrial Heritage Recording	This project was divided into three modules:				
*M1 – MPCH Documentary	Initially intended to be a participatory 'before' and 'after' record of works at Merton Priory Chapter House through film and photography, however delays to the MPCH project meant that the film is limited to a presentation of background to the works proposed. ⁽²⁷⁾	Groundwork London	12.6	17.8	Complete
M 2 – Wandle Treasures	Participative research including physical and digital mapping of historic artefacts and natural and cultural heritage, resulting in the production of a large, detailed hand-drawn map and map tour.	Building Exploratory	14.5	19.7	Complete

<i>Project title</i>	<i>Brief description</i>	<i>Lead body</i>	<i>£kaⁱ</i>	<i>£kb</i>	<i>Status</i>
M 3 – Mapping the Mills	Investigation and research into the mills of the Wandle with staff, volunteers and the Wandle Industrial Museum, resulting in the mapping of results into digital and hardcopy maps to be used in self-guided walks. Volunteers have also run a programme of public events/walks.	Building Exploratory	30.5	22.8	Due for completion March 2018
*C16 - Interpretation Strategy	A strategy for interpretation and communications, elaborated through the life of the Scheme as a series of the following 3 sub-projects:	LW team and all Partners			
*Web pages and Digital Archive	The online presence of the LWLP, hosted within the WVRPT website. An archive accessed via an interactive map. ⁽¹⁴⁾	LW Team and WVRPT		41.1	Complete Continues via WVRPT website.
*Wandle Watchers / Twinning	Integration of volunteer wildlife recording via several organisations including the MHP Nature Group, local Brownie and Scout packs, GiGL and the Piscators. Plus 3 cross-Borough surveys of Canada geese resulting in reports and mapping work. Newsletter and events leaflet production and distribution for community information about the Wandle.	LW Team		7	Complete Continues via WVRPT communications and ongoing GiGL biodiversity recording.
*Wandle Art project / Confluence: The River Speaks	Engagement of LW participant groups and other local residents in collecting field recorded sound and visual documentation of the river landscape. Commissioned on behalf of Greenland Group, developers of the Ram Quarter, the intended outcome is a permanent audio and projected AV installation in a new heritage centre on the site of the former Young's Brewery.	Enable Leisure and Culture / Pump House Gallery		8.8	Complete Continues with access to the art commissioned for the Heritage Centre.
**C25 - Mitcham Community Orchard & Gardens	Installation of interpretation panel and sampling equipment to support visits from local schools and the educational objectives within the wider community activities.	Mitcham Community Orchard Group	1.1	1.7	Complete Continues via ongoing MCOG activities.

<i>Project title</i>	<i>Brief description</i>	<i>Lead body</i>	<i>£kaⁱ</i>	<i>£kb</i>	<i>Status</i>
**C26 - Ravensbury Pond Platform	Installation of a pond viewing platform at Ravensbury Park Lake.	LB Merton and FoRP		5.8	Complete
	<i>D. Training and skills</i>				
*D17 - Wandle Rain Gardens (Climate Change Awareness)	Engaging local communities in Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) along the Wandle. Five SuDS measures were installed across three sites, with local communities heavily involved in planning and installation. The project delivered public engagement events, including a series of hands-on workshops, a public exhibition and a guided walk, in addition to a 'Living with Rainwater' guide and a public awareness film. ⁽²⁸⁾	London Wildlife Trust	62.2	53.7	Due for completion March 2018
D18 - River Guardians	19 'Wandle Clean-Ups' (10 LWLP funded) focussed on reducing pollution and litter as well as training volunteers in responding to category 3 pollution incidents. ⁽²⁹⁾	Wandle Trust	43.2	33.5	Complete Continues via Tesco Bags of Help Funding.
*D19 - Wandle Volunteers / Training Plan	An umbrella programme for volunteers and staff across the LW scheme including access to funding for training not identified within the individual projects, creating learning packs and educational films, and buying project related equipment.	LW Team with all Partners	104	88.5	Due for completion March 2018

Appendix 3: Evaluation context and methodology

This Appendix starts with a summary of HLF's requirements and guidance in respect of evaluation. It then introduces the purposes of this Final Report and presents the approach and methods adopted in its preparation and in our earlier evaluation work with *LW*.

HLF evaluation guidance

HLF requires that every Landscape Partnership should conduct a final evaluation towards the end of its scheme and submit a satisfactory report (embodying the results of the final evaluation and 'telling the story of the scheme, its achievements and lessons learned'⁽¹¹⁾ before it can 'sign off' the scheme and release the final 10% of grant money.⁽³⁰⁾ The Final Report must be an objective evaluation of what has been achieved. Common practice is for independent consultants to be engaged in the process, to a greater or lesser degree.

In line with HLF guidance however evaluation within *LW* has been an ongoing process since the launch of *LW*'s delivery phase, involving all *LW* partners aimed as much at improving future delivery as capturing what had already been achieved. This Final Report is similarly much more than a retrospective summative exercise to enable HLF to sign off its grant. It is effectively the CV of the scheme, a testament to the hard work and effort that has gone into delivery, a celebration of what has been achieved, and is intended as an input into *LW*'s legacy activities, and to assist other (especially urban) multi-project schemes working at a 'landscape' level, particularly in urban areas, in the preparation and delivery of their own schemes.

LW was conceived and developed under HLF's third (2008-13) Strategic Plan, during which HLF developed its approach to (and placed increasing emphasis on) effective monitoring and evaluation. Some of these changes include:

- An increasing emphasis on benefits (to heritage and for people) alongside monitoring of project implementation and expenditure.
- Looking beyond outputs (as measures of activity) to outcomes (longer term benefits to heritage and for people) in particular those which endure beyond the end of HLF funding (legacy).
- Working with partnership and project partners, seeing evaluation as a participative process which enhances delivery rather than primarily an external assessment of achievement.
- Utilising a wide variety of evidence including qualitative as well as quantitative indicators.

This changing approach is embodied in HLF's current (20013-18) generic guidance published in October 2012.⁽⁸⁾ HLF have also published guidance specifically tailored to LPs⁽³⁰⁾ following our own national evaluation of HLF's LP programme in 2011.⁽³¹⁾ The emphasis on outcomes is also contained in informal advice that HLF provides in regard to legacy planning⁽³²⁾ as well as in its concern that working at a landscape level should deliver benefits which are more than the sum of the outcomes of individual projects.

In parallel with the above and with the launch of HLF's new strategic framework (SF4 2013-18) in 2013a generic set of funding outcomes was elaborated, replacing the four aims specific to the LP programme, as follows:

- Benefits to heritage (identification/ recording, condition and management, interpretation);
- Benefits for individuals (access and learning, skills and training, volunteering, attitudes/ behaviour and enjoyment);
- Benefits for communities (improved environment, participation and engagement, organisational resilience, and the local economy)

Our evaluation (including our assessment in the main report of project outcomes in each of the programme areas and of *LW*'s outcomes and legacy) takes these more recent changes into account whilst recognising as a reference point HLF's evaluation advice as it existed at the time of submission of *LW*'s Stage 2 application in 2010.

The Final Evaluation of *LW*

Our contract as Independent Evaluator (IE) comprised three stages with a total nominal (i.e. costed) allocation of 46 days spread through each of the three years (c 15½ days p.a.) from the start of delivery to *LW*'s completion. Each stage includes working with the *LW* team and project partners to deliver principal outputs as follows:

Stage 1 (Dec 2014 – Oct 2015, 15 days) Development and implementation of a monitoring and evaluation framework.⁽⁹⁾ The Framework (produced as a working document to be 'owned' by the Partnership and revised as necessary) was agreed by the SG in March 2015.

Stage 2 (Nov 2015 - Oct 2016, 16 days) A Mid-Term Evaluation and Report (May 2016)⁽¹⁰⁾ followed by input into the Partnership's legacy planning.

Stage 3 (Aug 2017 - Jan 2018, 16 days) End of scheme evaluation and production of a Final Evaluation Report (this document).

This report represents the conclusion of an ongoing evaluative process commenced in early 2015 for which key interim outputs have included:

- **Extended case studies** of two completed projects contained in the Stage 1 Interim Report presented to the *LW* Steering Group and Board in November 2015.
- A **Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**⁽⁹⁾ produced in March 2015 in collaboration with the *LW* team and partners
- **Annual Reports** to the *LW* SG and Board
- A **Mid-Term Evaluation Report**⁽¹⁰⁾ presented to the *LW* AG in June 2016.

This Final Evaluation Report celebrates what *LW* has achieved, considers the lessons that have been learnt, and review the prospects for the future.

Methods

Quantitative data in this report is based primarily on information supplied by the LP team. Our own work has focused primarily on outcomes and legacy. Methods have included the following elements all of which have been conducted in liaison with the LP team, project leads and Partnership members who have provided invaluable information, advice and assistance.

Desk research

This has included examination of a wide range of documents relating to *LW* and its Partnership. A key focus has been the *LW* LCAP and supporting documents, monitoring data collected by the LP team, minutes of SG meetings and other sources including material relating to the *LW* area more generally.

Key Informant Interviews

A programme of interviews conducted both face-to-face and by telephone has included participants and volunteers as well as individuals who might reasonably be considered to have expert or 'inside' knowledge of *LW* and its projects

- *LW* team members, project leads and partner representatives (PL)
- 'Experts' including those involved in local cultural and natural heritage works
- Representatives of funding and partner bodies including the HLF Monitor and Regional Grants Officer.
- Volunteers (V)
- Project participants (PA)
- Others including survey respondents and individuals who had little contact with *LW*.

Site visits and liaison

Throughout the three years of evaluation, ongoing liaison with the LP team, partners, project leads and SG members who have provided information and assistance has been accompanied by a programme of site visits to all *LW* project locations. This has provided valuable supplementary information to the above and enabled us to 'ground truth' information secured from other sources.

Workshops and focus groups

An output from Stage 1 of the evaluation was an Evaluation Framework agreed by the SG in May 2015 which formed the basis of a workshop exercise at the November SG.

A further Evaluation and Legacy Workshop held at BedZed on 6 October 2016 focused on the progress of *LW* at scheme level, feeding in to the MTR. In addition attendance at a number of other meetings including Wandle Valley Forum (WVF, 2015, 2017) and Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust (WVRPT) AGM (2017) provided the opportunity for further informal discussions.

Case studies

Two extended project case studies – of Wandle Flowing Through Time (WFTT) and Reflecting the Wandle (RtW/ Vandalis) – were contained in the Stage 1 Interim Report presented to the *LW* Steering Group and Board in November 2015. Summaries of other case studies are presented in this report.

Participant surveys

An online surveyⁱ was conducted over three months September – November 2017. The questionnaire was designed in thematic sections, each commencing with one or more closed questions designed to elicit perceptions of or attitudes to *LW*'s aims and the achievements of its projects, but which importantly then provided the opportunity for (what were sometimes extended) open, narrative responses on the perceived strengths and weaknesses of *LW* in regard to each topic.

Requests to complete the questionnaire were issued via email to everyone on the *LW* contacts list and request to all partners and project leads to forward the invitation to their own contacts lists. Links to the survey were included in *LW* Newsletters and other communications as well as in the WVF newsletter and promulgated at events attended by the *LW* team; paper copies were also distributed from the *LW* office.

As of 10 December 2017 a total of 121 valid responses had been received. Experience from of other LPs suggests that this is a relatively good return from those who have had contact with the *LW* scheme. Irrespective of the number of responses received, it is important to note that that a survey of this sort cannot present a representative (and much less a statistically significant) sample of participants in *LW* let alone of the community of the *LW* area. In addition to its relatively low size, it is inevitably biased to individuals associated with *LW* projects and partner bodies. Summary data is unlikely to be representative of all those who have been involved with the *LW* scheme, much less of the wider Wandle communities at whom many activities were directed and must therefore be treated with caution.

No questions were mandatory and 'skipped' questions mean that aggregate responses to individual questions are generally less than the number of respondents overall. Nevertheless the narrative responses received (including those of individuals who had limited engagement with the scheme, as well

as the presence of some critical or hostile comments) suggests that these are likely to be reasonably representative of a wider spread of opinion.

Over half of respondents identified themselves as volunteers on *LW* projects and over one-third as participants or beneficiaries in *LW* events or activities (**Figure 35**). A fifth of respondents were project leads or organisers and 12% were aware of but had had little direct engagement with the *LW* scheme or its projects.

Significantly, over a quarter of all respondents identified other ways in which they have been involved with the

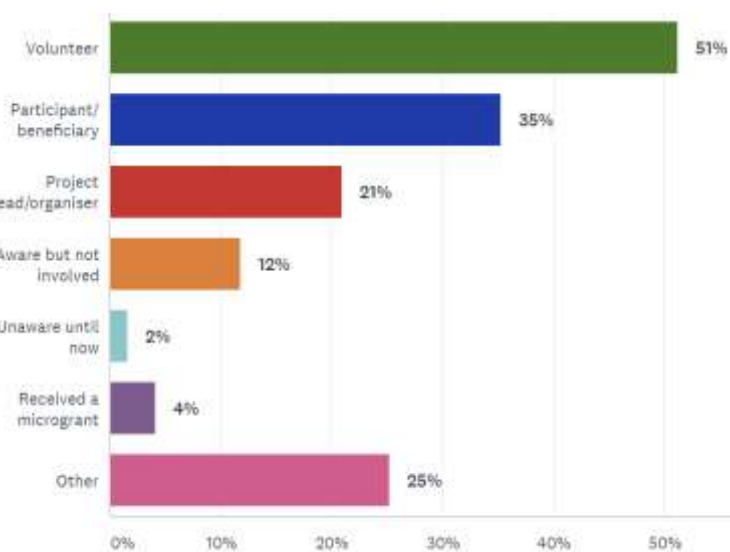


Figure 35 Engagement of questionnaire respondents with *LW*

river or its catchment independently of the *LW* scheme. These included recreational users (*'have*

ⁱ The questionnaire can be inspected at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LivingWandle>. This followed two earlier surveys. The first was launched in June 2015 and focused on the c 20 individuals listed in Groundwork's own end-of-project evaluations of two completed projects, WFTT and RtW (Vandalis); the survey resulted in total of only twelve responses. A second survey was conducted between February and April 2016 as part of the MTR, focused on the outcomes of all the then ongoing and completed projects, resulting in 73 valid responses.

paddled a kayak from the Mills to the Thames on several occasions'), community activists and employees of local organisations involved in managing the river or other facilities in the area.

Respondents were asked to identify those *LW* projects with which they had been involved. As with the data in (Figure 1) these are non-exclusive categories and a relatively high proportion of respondents had been involved with more than one project. The greatest response (around 25% in each case) came from those involved with projects led by Wandle Trust — invasive species control and/or physical river improvements and restoration (Figure 2). Eleven respondents selected the 'other' option to elaborate multiple minor engagements or ancillary activities.

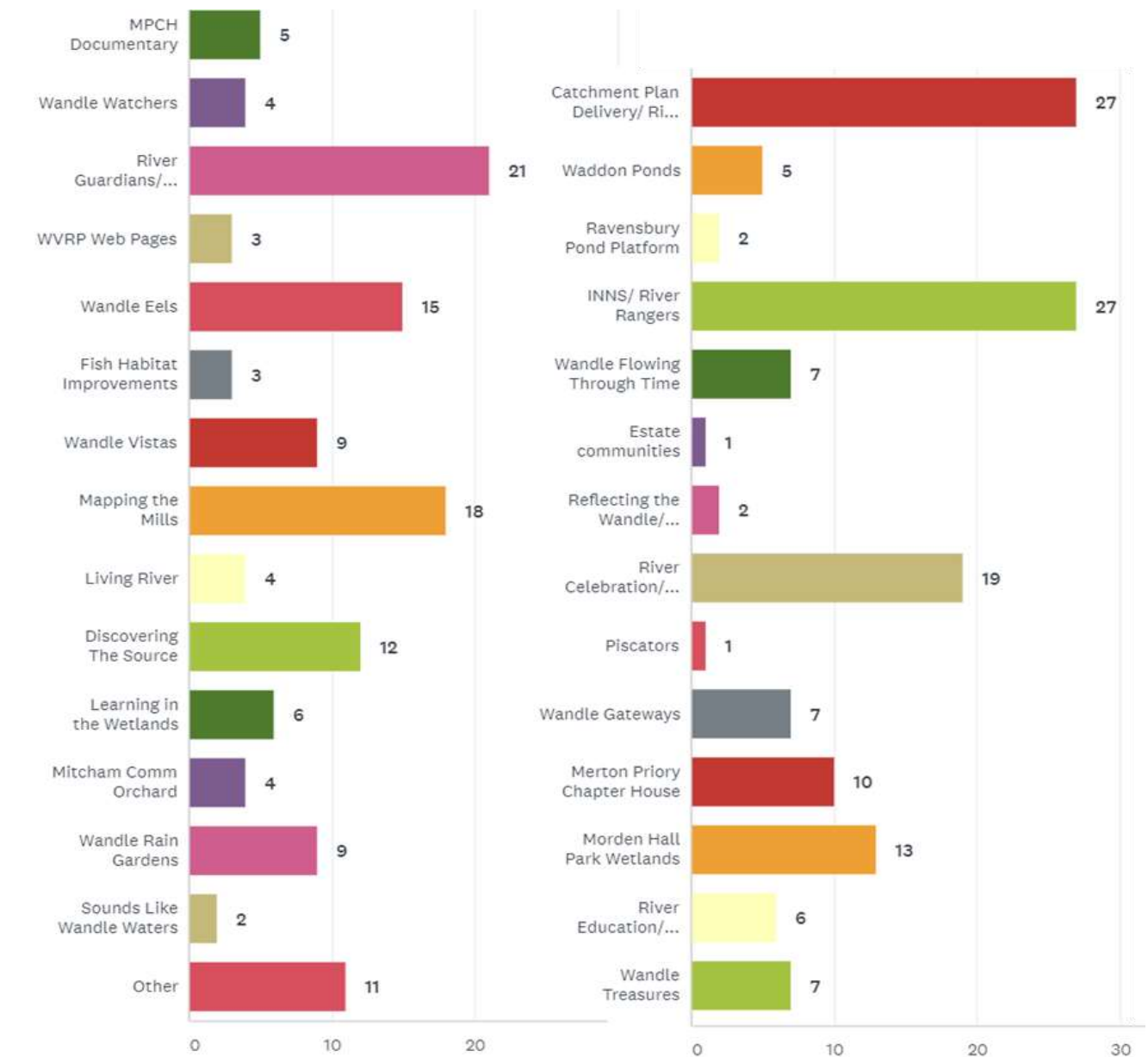


Figure 36 Involvement of questionnaire respondents with the range of *LW* projects

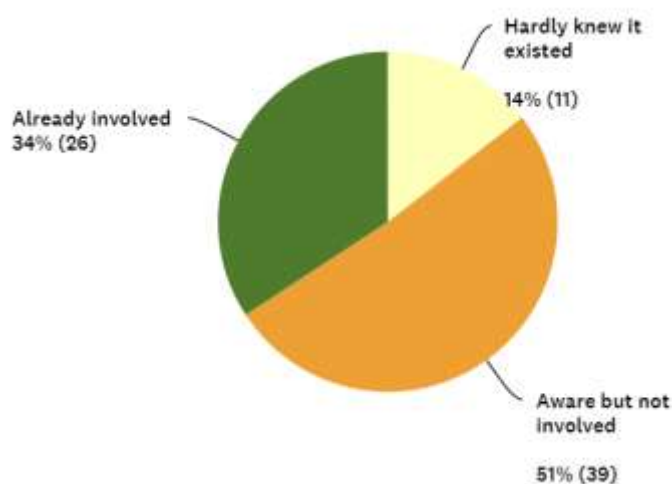


Figure 37 Before the Living Wandle scheme started in 2013, how much did you know about the River Wandle and how involved were you with it?

Respondents were also asked to state to what degree they had been involved with the River Wandle before the start of the *LW* LP scheme.

Over 60% of respondents were either unaware of the river's existence or if they were aware, had not been involved to any degree with it prior to their engagement with the scheme (Figure 37).

Over half of all respondents were age between 31 and 64, and a third (mainly volunteers) aged 65 or above; only 9 respondents (17%) were aged 18-30 and there were none under 17

Equal numbers of women and men responded to the survey.

Three respondents reported having a disability that limited participation in *LW* activities or projects.

None of those who offered further personal information declared as being a member of an ethnic minority. Several chose also to volunteer information on their employment status.

Just under three-quarters of respondents (and the majority of interviewees) lived or worked within the *LW* catchment (Figure 38) and almost 20% lived outside. 7 respondents were unsure.

Figure 4 (main report, page 8) shows the distribution of those respondents to the Final and Mid-term Surveys who provided their postcodes, together with those of Wandle Watchers retained on the *LW* records. Some half of individuals provided only the first part of their postcode and the map does not discriminate between locations of single individuals and those of several, however it can be seen that a significant number of respondents come from outside the immediate *LW* scheme area, that there are significantly greater numbers of Wandle Watchers than respondents to the survey, and that the overlap between the two surveys (i.e. the numbers of those who responded to both, as suggested by their postcode) is relatively small.

The questionnaire concluded with an invitation to respondents to indicate if they were prepared for us to follow up with a short telephone interview. Remarkably, almost half of those who responded to this question were willing to do so and provided their names and contact details for us to do this.

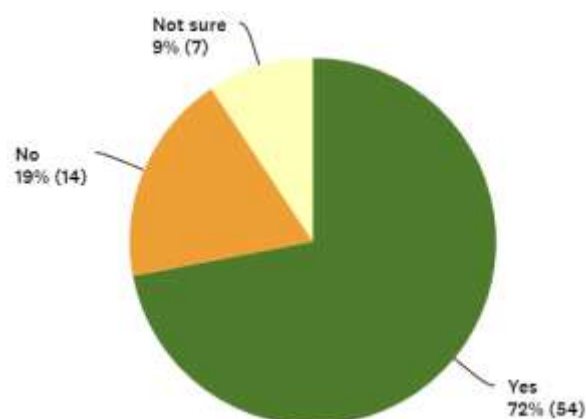


Figure 38 Do you live or work within or adjacent to the Living Wandle area?

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